

The Psychology Of Jingoism (1901)

1 Week Loan

John Atkinson Hobson

SLC
History
WW 860
HOB



University
of Glasgow

Library

Short Loan Collection

28 JAN 2010

SLC
History
WW 860
HOB



30114014621711

The Psychology Of Jingoism

John Atkinson Hobson

In the interest of creating a more extensive selection of rare historical book reprints, we have chosen to reproduce this title even though it may possibly have occasional imperfections such as missing and blurred pages, missing text, poor pictures, markings, dark backgrounds and other reproduction issues beyond our control. Because this work is culturally important, we have made it available as a part of our commitment to protecting, preserving and promoting the world's literature. Thank you for your understanding.

©

The Psychology of Jingoism

BY

J. A. HOBSON, M.A.

AUTHOR OF 'JOHN RUSKIN : SOCIAL REFORMER'
'THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA,' ETC.

London
Grant Richards
1901

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/isbn_9781120040008

WITHDRAWN
Horticultural Collection

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY — JINGOISM : ITS MEANING AND ORIGIN - - - - -	I

PART I

THE DIAGNOSIS

CHAPTER							
I.	CREDULITY	-	-	-	-	-	17
II.	BRUTALITY	-	-	-	-	-	29
III.	CHRISTIANITY IN KHAKI	-	-	-	-	-	41
IV.	VAINGLORY AND SHORTSIGHT	-	-	-	-	-	63
V.	THE ECLIPSE OF HUMOUR	-	-	-	-	-	69
VI.	"THE INEVITABLE" IN POLITICS	-	-	-	-	-	79
VII.	ARE EDUCATED JINGOES HONEST?	-	-	-	-	-	97

PART II

THE MANUFACTURE OF JINGOISM

I.	THE ABUSE OF THE PRESS	-	-	-	-	107
II.	PLATFORM AND PULPIT : A RECORD OF LICENCE AND SUPPRESSION - - - - -	-	-	-	-	123

CONTENTS

Introduction - Chapter I. The History of the Book

PART I

THE HISTORY OF THE BOOK

- 1. The History of the Book
- 2. The History of the Book
- 3. The History of the Book
- 4. The History of the Book
- 5. The History of the Book
- 6. The History of the Book
- 7. The History of the Book
- 8. The History of the Book
- 9. The History of the Book
- 10. The History of the Book

PART II

THE MANUFACTURE OF BOOKS

- 1. The Manufacture of Books
- 2. The Manufacture of Books
- 3. The Manufacture of Books
- 4. The Manufacture of Books
- 5. The Manufacture of Books
- 6. The Manufacture of Books
- 7. The Manufacture of Books
- 8. The Manufacture of Books
- 9. The Manufacture of Books
- 10. The Manufacture of Books

The Psychology of Jingoism

INTRODUCTORY

Jingoism : Its Meaning and Origin

THAT inverted patriotism whereby the love of one's own nation is transformed into the hatred of another nation, and the fierce craving to destroy the individual members of that other nation, is no new thing. Wars have not always, or perhaps commonly, demanded for their origin and support the pervasion of such a frenzy among the body of the people. The will of a king, of a statesman, or of a small caste of nobles, soldiers, priests, has often sufficed to breed and to maintain bloody conflicts between nations, without any full or fierce participation in the war-spirit by the lay multitude. Only in recent times, and even now over but a small part of the world, has the great mass of the

2 The Psychology of Jingoism

individuals of any nation been placed in such quick touch with great political events that their opinions, their passion, and their will, have played an appreciable part in originating strife, or in determining by sanction or by criticism any important turn in the political conduct of a war. In a long-continued war, the passion of a whole people has, even in old times, been gradually inflamed against another people's, with whom, for reasons usually known to few, a state of war existed ; and such martial animus, once roused, has lasted far beyond the limits of the strife, sometimes smouldering for decades or for centuries.

The quick ebullition of national hate termed Jingoism is a particular form of this primitive passion, modified and intensified by certain conditions of modern civilization. One who is curious of etymological origins will find true significance in the mode by which the word Jingo first came into vogue as an expression of popular pugnacity.

The oft-quoted saying of Fletcher of Saltoun, 'Let me make the ballads of a people, and let who will make the laws,' ever finds fresh illustration. A gradual debasement of popular art attending the new industrial era of congested, ugly, manufacturing towns has raised

Jingoism: Its Meaning and Origin 3

up the music-hall to be the most powerful instrument of such musical and literary culture as the people are open to receive.

Among large sections of the middle and the labouring classes, the music-hall, and the recreative public-house into which it shades off by imperceptible degrees, are a more potent educator than the church, the school, the political meeting, or even than the press. Into this 'lighter self' of the city populace the artiste conveys by song or recitation crude notions upon morals and politics, appealing by coarse humour or exaggerated pathos to the animal lusts of an audience stimulated by alcohol into appreciative hilarity.

In ordinary times politics plays no important part in these feasts of sensationalism, but the glorification of brute force and an ignorant contempt for foreigners are ever-present factors which at great political crises make the music-hall a very serviceable engine for generating military passion. The art of the music-hall is the only 'popular' art of the present day: its words and melodies pass by quick magic from the Empire or the Alhambra over the length and breadth of the land, re-echoed in a thousand provincial halls, clubs, and drinking saloons, until the remotest village is familiar

4 The Psychology of Jingoism

with air and sentiment. By such process of artistic suggestion the fervour of Jingoism has been widely fed, and it is worthy of note that the present meaning of the word was fastened upon it by the popularity of a single verse.

Nicer critics may even be disposed to dilate upon the context of this early use of the new political term—the affected modesty of the opening disclaimer, the rapid transition to a tone of bullying braggadocio, with its culminating stress upon the money-bags, and the unconscious humour of an assumption that it is our national duty to defend the Turk.

Indeed, without descending to minute analysis, we may find something instructive in the crude jumble of sentiment and the artistic setting which it finds—

‘ We don’t want to fight,
But, by Jingo, if we do,
We’ve got the men,
We’ve got the ships,
We’ve got the money too ’—

crowned by the domineering passion blurted out in the concluding line—

‘ The Russians shall not have Constantinople.’

How many of the audiences who cheered this sentiment to the echo, and were heated

Jingoism: Its Meaning and Origin 5

by it almost to enlisting point had, or even desired to have, the faintest notion of the Eastern Question, or even of the grounds of our immediate quarrel with Russia? A suggestion of national animus, with a vague assertion attached to it, is quite sufficient at this stage in the manufacture of Jingo spirit. We shall perceive later what detailed definiteness of conviction and assertion Jingoism is able to assume in its more developed forms.

It might appear that a sentiment thus born amid the fumes of the music-hall was unsubstantial, and would quickly evaporate. But this rude instrument of public feeling, though representing in a peculiar way the uprising of popular passions, does not stand alone; its work of suggestion and information is aided by many other instruments of instruction more reputable in appearance, and often more insidious in their appeal.

The object of the diagnosis in these chapters is to point, by a recent and most convincing illustration, the *modus operandi* of the various forces of public opinion, which are most active in the making and the maintenance of Jingoism, and to investigate the unexplored psychology of this powerful popular passion.

6 The Psychology of Jingoism

In order to realize the nature of present-day Jingoism, as distinguished from the national war-spirit in earlier times, attention must be given to a complex of new industrial and social conditions which favour the growth of the passion. Foremost among these is the rapid and multifarious intercommunication of ideas rendered possible by modern methods of transport. The mechanical facilities for cheap, quick carriage of persons, goods, and news, signify that each average man or woman of to-day is habitually susceptible to the direct influence of a thousand times as many other persons as were their ancestors before the age of steam and electricity. That people move about more freely and quickly, and are brought into personal intercourse with many more individuals, and of much more varied sorts, is perhaps the least important of these changes from the psychological standpoint. More important is the internal nature of the large-town life which absorbs the large majority of the population of the most advanced industrial countries of to-day. The physical and mental conditions of this town-life, for the majority of its population, are such as to destroy strong individuality of thought and desire. The crowding of large masses of work-people in

Jingoism: Its Meaning and Origin 7

industrial operations regulated by mechanical routine, an even more injurious congestion in home life, the constant attrition of a superficial intercourse in work or leisure with great numbers of persons subject to the same environment—these conditions are apt to destroy or impair independence of character, without substituting any sound, rational sociality such as may arise in a city which has come into being primarily for good life, and not for cheap work. The bad conditions of town life in our great industrial centres, lowering the vitality of the inhabitants, operate with peculiar force upon their nervous organization. It is true that the cerebral stimulus of town life has its gains, and in certain instances may feed true individuality. But normally it educates a surface smartness, an alertness of manipulation of ideas within a narrow area of interest and experience; and as the environment is largely similar for larger numbers, a similarity of character and life is bred in it. Moreover, the strain of adaptation to the many complex changes of external environment is, for those absorbed in the constant struggle for a livelihood, so grave as to impose a nervous wear and tear which is quite apparent in the features of a town population, and which marks them out with tolerable

8 The Psychology of Jingoism

distinctness from country folk. In every nation which has proceeded far in modern industrialism the prevalence of neurotic diseases attests the general nervous strain to which the population is subjected. This condition of the national life is fraught with two results. The resistance of the individual mind or will to suggestions from a neighbouring mind is weaker, and the common routine of city life to which all alike are subjected affords a common basis of appeal from mind to mind. Whatever, therefore, be the mode by which mind is conceived as operating upon mind, by argument, persuasion, or suggestion, every facility for effective acceptance is provided. The neurotic temperament generated by town life seeks natural relief in stormy sensational appeals, and the crowded life of the streets, or other public gatherings, gives the best medium for communicating them. This is the very atmosphere of Jingoism. A coarse patriotism, fed by the wildest rumours and the most violent appeals to hate and the animal lust of blood, passes by quick contagion through the crowded life of cities, and recommends itself everywhere by the satisfaction it affords to sensational cravings. It is less the savage yearning for personal participation in the fray

Jingoism: Its Meaning and Origin 9

✓ than the feeding of a neurotic imagination that marks Jingoism. The actual rage of the combat is of a different and a more individual order. Jingoism is the passion of the spectator, the inciter, the backer, not of the fighter; it is a collective or mob passion which, in as far as it prevails, makes the individual mind subject to a control that joins him irresistibly to his fellows.

This possession is facilitated by the sort of education which prevails among such peoples as our own. A little knowledge is most dangerous when it supplies the material and the instrument of unreason. A large population, singularly destitute of intellectual curiosity, and with a low valuation for things of the mind, has during the last few decades been instructed in the art of reading printed words, without acquiring any adequate supply of information or any training of the reasoning faculties such as would enable them to give a proper value to the words they read. A huge press has come into being for the purpose of supplying to this uneducated people such printed matter as they can be induced to buy. Most of this matter consists of statements, true or false, designed to give passing satisfaction to some simple form of curiosity, some

10 The Psychology of Jingoism

low sense of humour, or some lust of animalism. Some of it, however, is designed to induce a conviction or to rouse a feeling which may affect conduct. The simplest form is the trade advertisement, whereby one, who is known to be an interested party, recommends his own goods and, by continually repeated suggestions, produces a belief which induces the public to purchase his wares. If the vendor stood in the market and recommended his goods *viva voce*, his spoken word would carry far less weight. The appearance of hard truth imparted by the mechanical rigidity of print possesses a degree of credit which, when the statement is repeated with sufficient frequency, becomes well-nigh absolute. No evidence is essential: the bare dogmatic statement, though emanating from an admittedly interested source, produces conviction and moves to action. How great a power is here placed in the control of a commercial clique or a political party, or any body of rich, able, and energetic men desirous to impose a general belief and a general policy upon the mass of the people! This power of suggestion through print acts mainly upon the individual when it is intended to convey some simple sort of information as shall influence private conduct. But where

Jingoism: Its Meaning and Origin 11

the appeal is primarily to the passions, and statements are 'published' in order to influence public conduct, the power of the press attains its zenith. Any slight tendency of more reasonable folk to question the accuracy of sensational matter obviously designed to inflame the general mind is overborne by the common pulse of passion which sways them as members of a crowd. The terse, dogmatic, unqualified, and unverifiable cablegram is the most potent form of this emotional explosive: it purports to place the mind of the million in immediate and associated contact with the distant sensational event in such wise as to quench all cavil or question; its meaning, heightened and expanded through the sounding board of the press, settles down irresistibly upon the public mind. This is the ideal mode of suggestion—a short, sharp voice of mysterious authority acting simultaneously upon millions of minds whose interaction of passionate sympathy gives it speedy vogue in common talk, and implants it in the small stock of recently acquired impressions. Consideration of this process explains how a dramatic fiction thus implanted is able to survive the most complete exposure, even when the contradiction is conveyed through the same channel as the

12 The Psychology of Jingoism

- falsehood. Further analysis of mass-psychology, disclosing the inhibition of comparison and normal reasoning processes, will explain how the most contrary suggestions of fact or feeling can be held simultaneously by the same persons, who have yielded their individual judgment to the sway of a common passion thus prompted and informed.

National hate finding sensational expression through war is the best emotional material for the operation of these forces, and the possession by the passion of Jingoism of the mass-mind of a people intellectually disposed like that of Great Britain presents a subject of incomparable interest for psychological study.

- One word in conclusion of these introductory remarks. I have distinguished the spectatorial passion of Jingoism from the cruder craving for personal participation in bloodshed which seizes most savage peoples when the war-spirit is in the air. Jingoism is essentially a product of 'civilized' communities, though deriving its necessary food from the survival of savage nature : it presents therefore a number of more complex moral and intellectual problems for consideration. Its force, dependent, as we have seen, upon the submission of the individual will and judgment to collective

Jingoism : Its Meaning and Origin 13

suggestion, will vary with the resistance offered by trained reason and firmly rooted individual convictions applicable to the issues concerned in the suggestion.

The rapid and numerous changes in the external structure of modern civilization have been accompanied by grave unsettlement of the inner life ; a breaking up of time-honoured dogmas, a collapse of principles in politics, religion, and morality have sensibly reduced the power of resistance to strong passionate suggestions in the individuals of all classes. Hence the common paradox that an age of universal scepticism may also be an age of multifarious superstitions, lightly acquired and briefly held, but dangerous for character and conduct while they hold their sway. Among civilized peoples, those of Western Europe and of the United States are at the present time, perhaps to a greater extent than ever before, destitute of fixed and clearly defined convictions upon root-issues of ethics and politics. Their education has, among the better educated classes, been instrumental largely in producing scepticism and fluctuating dilettantism, while among the masses it has produced a low curiosity and indiscriminate receptivity. This general unsettlement of habits and principles implies in

14 The Psychology of Jingoism

individuals a collapse of standards of thought and feeling, a weakening of individual responsibility in the formation of opinions, and a correspondingly increased susceptibility to Jingoism and other popular passions in the several shapes which they from time to time assume.

PART I

The Diagnosis

CHAPTER I

CREDULITY

A RECENT French writer, discoursing on the nature of 'a crowd,' attributes to it a character and conduct which is lower, intellectually and morally, than the character and conduct of its average member. Even when the crowd is little other than a fortuitous concourse, and not an organized gathering of persons already assimilated by some common feeling or idea, a sort of common mind is temporarily set up, which often seems to dominate, or even to supersede, the normal mind of the individual. A sensational rumour, a sudden unusual spectacle, the powerful appeal of a mob orator, so agitates the mass of individuals, hitherto related by mere propinquity, as to raise, by a largely unconscious interaction of personalities, a quick ferment of thought and feeling which impels individuals to take part

18 The Psychology of Jingoism

in a common action that is not their mere individual choice. This passion of the mob, implying an abandonment of self-control by the individual, is a fact too well recognized to require proof. But its nature and origin are both obscure and interesting. This war in South Africa casts a powerful searchlight upon the nature of the large, and in some ways highly-organized, crowd which we call the British nation. The suddenness, the size, and the manifold sensationalism of the occurrence are the precise conditions requisite for testing the mass-mind of the people. What the orator does for his audience the press has done for the nation ; it has injected notions and feelings which, instead of lying in the separate minds of their recipients, have bubbled up into enthusiastic sympathy, and induced a community of thought, language, and action which was hitherto unknown. The conditions of the case do not allow us to regard this common conduct as a mature fruit of the reason of the nation ; it must evidently be regarded as an instinctive display of some common factors of national character which lie outside reason, and belong, in ordinary times, to the province of the subconscious. Whatever qualities of deliberation and calculation may have been present in the

conduct of the politicians, financiers, and journalists who were the direct conscious agents in bringing about the war, the popular approval of, and enthusiasm for, the war were not roused by any ratiocinative processes. The British nation became a great crowd, and exposed its crowd-mind to the suggestions of the press; these suggestions, taking form simultaneously in a million separate minds, gathered a force of consentaneous passion by private and public intercourse, and by degrees this crowd, or mass-mind, was possessed by a body of vague, but strongly-worded, doctrine about the war, and a powerful spirit of loyalty and animosity.

Our French psychologist described the mob-mind as reverting to the type of the savage or the child in intellect and morals, less amenable to ordinary rules of reason, more prone to sudden, uncontrollable gusts of passion, than its constituent units. Whether it be that the idiosyncrasies in a crowd cancel one another, and so the operative character is composed of common fundamental or race factors, or whether the superstructure which centuries of civilization have imposed upon the ordinary mind and conduct of the individual gives way before some sudden wave of ancient savage nature roused from its sub-conscious depths, need not concern

20 The Psychology of Jingoism

us here. Nor need we accept the view that the standard of feeling and reason of the crowd is always lower than that of its individuals; there is some evidence to indicate that it may sometimes be higher—at any rate, so far as feelings are concerned. Much will probably depend upon the character and motive of the suggestion, and something on the circumstances of the recipient crowd.

For purposes of the present study, however, the hypothesis of reversion to a savage type of nature is distinctly profitable. The war-spirit, as displayed in the non-combatant mass-mind, is composed of just those qualities which differentiate savage from civilized man.

One of the most universal characteristics of the savage mind is credulity. Since credulity, or willingness to believe upon no evidence or insufficient evidence, belongs to all untrained minds, it may be thought that the majority of people, even in a so-called civilized nation, may or must remain credulous. But there are degrees of credulity. The average man or woman in modern England has a mind highly trained in reasoning, as compared with most savage peoples, and there is a minority of educated persons expert in following trains of thought and weighing evidence.

Now, the most astonishing phenomenon of this war-fever is the credulity displayed by the educated classes. It is, of course, true that ordinary education is so curiously defective in this country that not one in fifty persons could have correctly named the capital of the Orange Free State at the beginning of 1899. But education might have been expected to teach caution in the acceptance and assimilation of the flood of information which poured through the press during the last two years. Our educated classes are usually scornful of the man who believes everything he reads in the newspapers, and who pronounces quick dogmatic judgments upon delicate and intricate points of politics or economics. Yet the majority of these cultured persons have submitted their intelligence to the dominion of popular prejudice and passion as subserviently as the man in the street, whom they despise. The canons of reasoning which they habitually apply in their business or profession, and in the judgments they form of events and characters, are superseded by the sudden fervour of this strange amalgam of race feeling, animal pugnacity, rapacity, and sporting zest, which they dignify by the name of patriotism.

No one would think of accepting in any

22 The Psychology of Jingoism

ordinary private matter of importance the testimony of interested parties, unchecked and incapable of cross-examination, as sufficient evidence to warrant the spending of his money and the risking of his life. Yet the testimony to the Outlander grievances and the Dutch conspiracy given as the justification of this war is almost entirely of this order. The allegation that the press of South Africa, which has furnished information to the press and people of this country, is owned and controlled by a small, known and named body of mining capitalists and speculators who have openly avowed the gains they hoped to make by this war, is not seriously disputed. Yet persons fully aware of this allow their minds to be swayed by the unanimity of the British testimony from South Africa, as presented by this press and by the politicians who have got their information from the same factory of falsehood.

These same persons close their minds to the remnant of the so-called 'pro-Boer' press in this country, and to the entire continental press, upon the plea that this press has been bought by Transvaal money—a plea which has no other origin than the statement of the above-named Rhodesian press.

Educated men and women, accustomed to

weigh evidence from both sides, accept as final proof this fabricated unanimity of British South African opinion, refusing all consideration to the Dutch South African opinion, which is equally unanimous in the opposite sense. This evidence they affect to support by the authority of Sir Alfred Milner. But why should they prefer the authority of this man, who had been two years in the country, had never set foot in the Transvaal, and had been disqualified by his official position from free intercourse with the colonists, to the unanimous authority of the late Cape Ministry, composed about equally of British and Dutch blood, men born and bred in South Africa? If the former had driven home his case of Outlander grievances and Dutch conspiracy by good and sufficient evidence, we might, indeed, discard the meagreness of his personal authority, and rely upon the merits of this evidence. But no trained English lawyer, reading the Edgar incident and other test grievances in the light of the admitted bias of the Johannesburg press and the South African League, the two chief sources of Sir Alfred Milner's testimony, and having regard to the nature of a new mining settlement, could possibly consider the more serious charges relating to life and property to

24 The Psychology of Jingoism

be proved. As for the still graver charges launched against the Cape Dutch of conspiring with the Republics to destroy the British supremacy and to establish a Dutch South African Republic, belief in them still rests on the bare word of Sir A. Milner, unsupported by any valid shred of evidence. It is a very grave scandal that he has allowed this language, uttered nearly two years ago, to operate upon the mind of the British nation without adducing any evidence of his charges against 'a certain section of the press' in the Colony and 'a large number of our Dutch fellow-colonists.' That the actual rising of a number of Dutch Colonists from sympathy with what they regarded as an unwarranted attack on the Republics should be taken as proof of the charges made by the High Commissioner is but one more signal instance of the corrupted intelligence of the patriot.

Charges of treason against the Afrikaner Bond, of an avowed policy to 'drive the British into the sea,' and armed preparations dating far back into the eighties, have been so persistently repeated from so many quarters as to win a half-conscious acceptance among many who distrusted the sources of the original accusations. It may therefore be well to invite any

who still desire to have a reasonable faith to turn their best practical intelligence upon the sort of evidence of the conspiracy furnished by such a work as that which the *Times* has humorously entitled, 'The History of the Boer War.' How unsatisfactory this evidence still remains may be judged by the ingenuous admission in the Preface that it is 'largely cumulative.'

The theory of 'cumulative evidence' consists in a pretence that fifty pieces of bad evidence proceeding from a common tainted source are exchangeable for one piece of good evidence. When any one admits that his case rests on 'cumulative evidence' it may be understood that he knows its falsity, and trusts to the corrupted intelligence of his readers for such acceptance as it may win.

But the most remarkable example of this corruption is afforded by the adoption of members of the mine-owning confraternity as authoritative advisers on the nature of the war and its settlement. Mr. Fitzpatrick, whose book, 'The Transvaal from Within,' is accepted as if it were the unbiassed statement of a skilled historian who happened to reside in the Transvaal, is a member of the Eckstein firm (the local branch of Wernher, Beit, and

26 The Psychology of Jingoism

Co.), and was one of the leaders in the Johannesburg insurrection of 1895; Mr. Lionel Philipps, whose recommendations on settlement were fully reported in the *Times*, is a partner in the same firm; Mr. Hosken, another widely-read authority, is an importer of mining machinery, an ex-director of the Dynamite Company, and a director of the *Transvaal Leader*, a newspaper started in the spring of 1899 to bring matters to the test of battle; while Messrs. Rudd, Hayes, Hammond, Robinson, Farrar, and other men, whose voices resound through the British press, are directors and employés of those leading Rand companies, which have calculated the millions they hope to make from the results of the war. It is reasonable that these men should be heard, but it is not reasonable that their statements of fact and views of policy should be taken as authoritative, while the facts and views set forth, not merely by Dutch Colonists, but by British travellers like Mr. Bryce and Mr. Selous, are treated with contempt.

The unanimous support of the Christian Churches in South Africa is similarly raised into authority by leaving out of account the Dutch Christian Churches, which are, of course, equally unanimous in denouncing the war. It

is, indeed, curious that men and women with any knowledge of history should adduce the blessing of the Churches as testimony to the justice of any cause. Where have the priests ever failed to bless a war supported by authority and popular passion ?

The consensus of general opinion among the British in South Africa and in this country, the authority of British politicians and of interested financiers, backed by a special British rendering of South African history contained in countless books issued by the British press, could carry no conviction to the minds of men accustomed to weigh evidence, unless these men had previously handed over their judgment to be driven by mob-passion.

The credulity regarding root-issues, thus induced, carries with it a credulity regarding details which is even more astonishing in its character. It may be worth while to remind readers that every British account of Boer atrocities in treatment of wounded, looting, white flag, and Red Cross incidents is paralleled by Dutch accounts of British atrocities rendered with a similar disregard of canons of evidence ; that the history of the Franco-German, and indeed of every other war, has been riddled by similar stories. But while the 'intelligent' public

28 The Psychology of Jingoism

knows enough of history to be aware that this is true of all wars in the past, it pretends that this war is an exception, and so each man feeds his passion from the common sewer, draining the poisonous vapours which degrade his intellect and inflame the latent lusts of animalism, and repeating idle patter about 'a just and necessary war for the furtherance of liberty and the protection of the British empire,' for which it has precisely the same sort of evidence as for the belief that Colman's is the best mustard, or Branson's extract of coffee is perfection.

CHAPTER II

BRUTALITY

THE modern newspaper is a Roman arena, a Spanish bull-ring, and an English prize-fight rolled into one. The popularization of the power to read has made the press the chief instrument of brutality. For a halfpenny every man, woman, or child can stimulate and feed those lusts of blood and physical cruelty which it is the chief aim of civilization and of government to repress, and which, in their literal modes of realization, have been assigned by modern specialization to soldiers, butchers, sportsmen, and a few other trained professions. The business man, the weaver, the clerk, the clergyman, the shop assistant, can no longer satisfy these savage cravings, either in personal activity or in direct spectacular display; but the art of reading print enables them to indulge *ad libitum* in ghoulish gloating over scenes of human suffering, outrage, and destruction.

30 The Psychology of Jingoism

Blended with the root-passion of sheer brutality are certain other feelings, more complex in origin and composition—admiration of courage and adroitness, the zest of sport, curiosity, the interest in swift change and the unusual: all these serve to conceal and decorate the dominant force of brutality, that Yahoo passion which revels in material disorder and destruction, with carnage for its centre-piece. That this passion, like other phases of the war fever, is of social origin, and grows by swift, unseen contagion and communication, is made evident by the character and behaviour of its victims. Mild and aged clergymen; gently bred, refined English ladies; quiet, sober, unimaginative business men, long to point a rifle at the Boers, and to dabble their fingers in the carnage. The basic character of the passion is disclosed by the fact that death and destruction by fire-arms do not satisfy; it is the cold steel and the twist of the British bayonet in the body of the now defenceless foe that brings the keenest thrill of exultation. Many will deny this subjection to sheer animalism—in some cases a revulsion of pity, or some better human feeling, hides it; but, wherever the dissecting-knife is honestly applied, the essential brutality which underlies the glow of patriotic triumph in

'another British victory' is discernible. Watch the features, listen to the voice of your Jingo friend when he rolls over his tongue some tasty morsel of his favourite war correspondent, or retails the latest sensation of the cablegram. Sex, age, nurture, education, refined surroundings, are of little avail to resist, or even modify, the pulsation of the primitive lust which exults in the downfall and the suffering of an enemy; the patriotic publican or stockbroker may show more honesty in expression of his triumph; but the same animal hate, vindictiveness, and bloodthirstiness, lurks in the mildest-mannered patriot, and surprises him by its occasional outburst. Such passion is a leveller, disclosing human nature in its common character, and teaching an equality which is no flattering ideal, but a convincing testimony to the descent of man. The democratic saturnalia of Ladysmith and Mafeking Days are generally admitted to be a revelation of hitherto unknown British character; and yet the sociality of brutish revelry upon these days was but a faint, spluttering expression of the actual feelings which boiled over into this flag-waving, drunkenness, and maniacal shouting. At all times the mob-nature has seized the coarser and more reckless elements in the

32 The Psychology of Jingoism

community, and impelled them to similar scenes of riot; the distinctive feature of 'Mafeking' was the wide prevalence of a sudden fury which broke down for the nonce the most sacred distinction of classes, and fused the most antagonistic elements of London life for a brief moment into anarchic fraternity.

Under the force of this passion collapse all those qualities upon which Englishmen, in their normal life, most plume themselves. The true John Bull, whether he be farmer, merchant, shopkeeper, or artisan, is an orderly man, a respecter of persons and property, a lover of fair play, a hater of unnecessary pain and cruelty: such are the solid foundations of his respectability and success in life.

A florilegium of newspaper cuttings illustrative of the deeds and words to which these respectable men and women have committed themselves during the last twelve months would, by their quantity and their intensity, suffice to ruin this traditional national character in history. The few examples which I here insert are not selected for extremity or for rarity, for all readers will be able to equal or surpass them from personal observation; they merely serve to mark the nature of the national hysteria.

The craving for blood was first brought home to me in South Africa by the talk of certain shopkeepers from Bloemfontein, upon whom race lust had gained so strong a hold that they openly expressed their fears lest the Boers should give in before a sufficient number of them had been shot. This has remained throughout the prevalent tone of the British in South Africa; but of this passion there seemed some sufficient explanation from recent history and race contact. But that English men and women should of a sudden exhibit a fanatical desire to pierce and tear and hack the bodies of men whom they had never seen, and whose very name they hardly knew a year ago, is indeed an experience calculated to stagger any confidence one might have held in man as a rational and moral being. The 'comic spirit,' in its most sardonic mood, could find no more curiously suggestive material than the record of the pranks of British patriotism under the strain of this experience. Here, for instance, is an august person, the Lord Lieutenant of a county, addressing a body of moral and high-minded English gentlemen and ladies :—

Neither you nor I believe in these perpetual appeals to Providence in the wrong place and at the wrong time.

34 The Psychology of Jingoism

Neither do we believe in these continual quotations from Scripture. We do not believe, either you or I or anybody else here, in the man who holds the Bible in one hand and the Mauser rifle in the other. (Cheers). And another bit of advice I should like to give you is this—if you meet a gentleman, a somewhat aged gentleman, whose name begins with a K, anywhere down Pretoria way, I ask you to make him sing Psalms out of the wrong side of his mouth—(cheers)—and as to his cant, drive it down his throat with a dose of lyddite—(cheers)—and three inches of bayonet to keep it there. (Prolonged cheers.)

This has been the common language of English gentlemen in first-class carriages, in club smoke-rooms, and in all other haunts of free conversation; and English ladies have done their best to assert the doctrine of sex equality in sentiment and language.

The maker of headlines has displayed a masterly knowledge of the temper of the beast he feeds, and 'Cronje withered in a hell of fire' remains in my memory as one of many graphic phrases.

The experience of this war thoroughly explodes the old ideal of John Bull as a blunt, frank man who loves a fair fight with a foeman whose courage and prowess he is ready to admit. The black slime of his malice has been hardly less characteristic of his Jingoism than the animal brutality with which it is associated; it

has joyed him to tear with his tongue the character of his enemy as well as to dig steel into his body. The war-makers in South Africa are keen-witted enough to perceive this, and are goading the maddened Bull into slaking his thirst for revenge by a settlement which shall justify their business sagacity. To burn farms, shoot unarmed foes, confiscate stock, disenfranchise and imprison their political enemies, are requirements of the political situation, and these men, aided by their false prophets, would use the British madness for these ends. History will find the crucial instances of British brutality in this policy of vengeance exacted from the foemen whom we call 'rebels.' The Hon. J. D. Logan, M.L.C., perhaps offers an extreme instance of this feeling, but the publication of the following paragraph has hardly elicited a word of condemnation in this country :—

MATJESFONTEIN, May 23rd.—(From our Correspondent.)—Before the Dukes left here for the front Mr. Logan armed them with a Maxim, with the following result: 'From Colonel Spence Douglas to Hon. Logan, Matjesfontein.—May 22nd.—Your Maxim was in action yesterday, and did excellent work. Much obliged to you for all your kindness to me and the regiment. Hope all well with you.' This brought the following reply from Mr. Logan: 'Exceedingly glad that gun has been of use. *Will pay men using it one pound for every rebel they shoot, but will deduct twenty-five per cent. for all prisoners taken.*'

36 The Psychology of Jingoism

Two years ago most Englishmen would have asserted confidently that England, though engaged in a war to break down 'a corrupt oligarchy' in the Transvaal, had so much nobility of nature that she could admire the stubborn resistance of a handful of farmers fighting for the independence of their country, and that even in the act of war our sympathies would have flowed in the direction of a generous treatment of such a foe. What do we find? When the policy of wholesale devastation carried out by British troops over large districts, the burning of farms, looting of cattle, cutting down of fruit trees, and breaking of dams is announced to the nation, it awakes in the mob-mind no other feeling than one of grim satisfaction, expressed by the usual comment, 'Serve them right; they shouldn't have begun the war!' No shame whatever is felt for the wanton and futile brutality of such a course, for the flagrant breaches of the very canons of 'civilized warfare' which we as a nation had imposed upon the Conferences of the Powers—nothing but a chuckle of savage satisfaction in the common man, a brief irrelevant, 'Yes, war is brutal!' in the more 'civilized' Jingo!

How far brutality is capable of carrying the

nation is perhaps best illustrated in the open and frequent proposals to shoot Boer prisoners as 'rebels.' The ordinary Jingo is quite satisfied that we have a 'right' to do so, since we have annexed the Republics; and he has never ceased to advocate the policy, undeterred by the reflection that reciprocity in such an outrage would cost us at least as many lives as we should take. Nor is this merely the loose talk of the drinking-bar or the club smoke-room. One of the most respectable organs of public opinion—the *Standard*—in its issue of October 16th, used language which has no other meaning than as a direct incitation to the massacre of prisoners.

In every rebellion a point is reached at which the services of the Provost Marshal become more effective than those of the strategist. The prompt and ruthless punishment of every insurgent burgher caught *in delicto* is required. We cannot keep a troop of horse outside each Boer farm, but we can show its occupant that he risks something more than his freedom, or even his property, when he takes up arms against the Crown.

Military opinion in the Transvaal capital urges that a Proclamation should be issued, declaring that any Boer found with arms in his hand, and without uniform, shall be treated as a rebel, rather than as a prisoner of war. Perhaps the time has arrived for even more drastic measures.

In interpreting this infamous suggestion, it

38 The Psychology of Jingoism

must be borne in mind that the entire body of the Boer army is 'without uniform,' with the exception of such as have taken khaki uniform from captured British soldiers. The finishing touch of brutality is therefore set upon our policy by an order, issued by Lord Roberts just before his departure from South Africa, to the effect that all Boer prisoners wearing khaki were to be shot at once.

If the *Standard* may be taken to represent the mob-mind of the well-to-do Conservative classes, the following passage from the *Daily Telegraph* of October 17th may be taken to set forth the cruder brutality of the commercial classes of the metropolis :—

It will probably be found that these sullen malcontents will go on fighting so long as they have a bullet in their bandoliers, on the off-chance of slaying one of their conquerors, unless the British authorities make it clear that all caught with arms in their hands will be shot without mercy. The Germans had no compunction in so dealing with the *Francs-Tireurs*, and their severity did much to shorten the war. We shall hope to see the same measures adopted in South Africa unless the various forces now patrolling the two conquered territories meet with immediate success. A few such engagements as that which is reported near Vryheid, in which Bethune's Mounted Infantry are said to have killed sixty of the enemy, would speedily dishearten the marauders, and the proclamation of a specific date after which every armed

burgher should be treated as a rebel and shot would be productive of nothing but good.

It is not the cruelty or the palpable injustice of these measures that concern us in our present analysis, but the complacent and even exultant acceptance of them by the mob-mind of the Jingo public here at home. Rightly understood, these passages from the *Standard* and the *Daily Telegraph* are the most damning testimony to the degradation of British character that has yet been given.

Those who know the means adopted to inflame the Imperial sentiment in our colonies and dependencies will, however, not be surprised to learn that in definite brutality the Jingoism even of the *Standard* and the *Telegraph* is outdone. A recent issue of the *Indian Planters' Gazette* contains the following :—

Not only should the Boer be slain, but slain with the same ruthlessness that they slay a plague-infected rat. Exeter Hall may shriek, but blood there will be and plenty of it, and the more the better. The Boer resistance will further this plan, and enable us to find the excuse that Imperial Great Britain is fiercely anxious for—the excuse to blot the Boers out as a nation, to turn their land into a vast shambles, and remove their name from the muster-roll of South Africa.

It will be vehemently denied that such a

40 The Psychology of Jingoism

sentiment occupies the British mind. But this denial will be false. Our press, our politicians indeed make no such honest avowal. But the *Indian Planters' Gazette* has dared to put into print the true craving of Jingoism which in this country has everywhere pervaded private conversation in the railway carriage, the drawing-room, the tap-room, and has occasionally risen to the publicity of the music hall. Kipling's 'Good killing at Paardeburg, the first satisfactory killing of the war,' and the phrase 'exterminate the vermin' which, in spite of official disclaimers, did actually voice the general sentiment of the British of Natal at the outbreak of hostilities, express honestly the savage passion of the mob-mind in this country. The public has throughout the war been prepared to accept and approve any measure adopted by the military to crush 'the rebellion,' the bloodier the better. This is the naked truth of the matter, and it is best to face it.

A twelvemonth's debauch in these ancient and abandoned stews of savage lust has set back the dial of civilization more points than we care to contemplate. All that the popular education of half a century has done, and vastly more, is lost in this single bout of the war-fever.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANITY IN KHAKI

✓ THERE are some to whom the political support given to this war by the Christian Churches has been a sudden revelation and a shock. This ought not to have been the case. When has a Christian nation ever entered on a war which has not been regarded by the official priesthood as a sacred war? In England the State Church has never permitted the spirit of the Prince of Peace to interfere when statesmen and soldiers appealed to the passions of race-lust, conquest, and revenge. Wars, the most insane in origin, the most barbarous in execution, the most fruitless in results, have never failed to get the sanction of the Christian Churches.* No one now defends the justice or

* Contrast the attitude of the Buddhist Churches in Burmah which preached the duty of non-resistance, and denied the sanction of religion to the patriots who sought to defend their native land against the invasion of British troops.—Cf. Fielding, 'The Soul of a People.'

42 The Psychology of Jingoism

necessity of the Crimean War ; yet the pulpits resounded with the same military blare, bishops, priests, and deacons vying in loud approbation, and prophesying with single consent, 'Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, for the Lord shall deliver it into the king's hands.' The Nonconformist Churches and their congregations were seriously divided ; the wealthier and more respectable among them followed the secular authorities, as is their wont. None of the Churches or their representatives would now think of defending the Crimean War, but they have learnt nothing from their error, least of all repentance : neither the teaching of history nor the spirit of religion has spoiled the free-hearted enthusiasm with which they have incited our soldiers to kill, and burn, and plunder in South Africa. Imperialist statesmen boast that this confederacy in bloodshed has annealed the colonies to the mother country : in similar fashion we may find the long-talked-of union of Christian Churches, not in any common acceptance of theology or in co-operation for charitable works, but in the common acceptance of a propaganda of bloody deeds in the name of civilization. To those who best understand the social and financial structure of the Churches and the capacity of self-deceit which self-interest is

able to develop, this will seem no wild word of cynical exaggeration.

In order to understand what has occurred, we must remember that the ethics of the Hebrew Scriptures has never really taken root in the soul of the British nation. I do not mean that we have always failed to live up to our ideal, but that the Christian ethics as condensed in the Sermon on the Mount and the New Commandment has never really furnished an ideal for us. The Hebrew ethics taken over with the religion of Christianity is not a natural product of British thought, it does not express our national attitude towards life. It is no more possible to transplant the ethics of an Eastern nation into the far West than to transplant their most delicate flora and fauna. The soul of a people is not portable. The moral teaching of Jesus has always languished, as an exotic, in this country. It matters not whether we test the matter by reference to the Old or the New Testament. Neither the primitive morality of the former nor the active charitable ideals of the latter have ever thriven in the English people. Just as we are not for peace 'at any price,' so we are not for the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount 'at any price.' We try to represent our lapses

44 The Psychology of Jingoism

as justified by changes in modern conditions of life, etc., but this is only a shallow sophistry which fails even to deceive us while we utter it.

In fact, these teachings have never furnished us with vital veritable ideals. We have had a standard of desirable conduct, ideals of our own, sometimes good and elevated, standards of good manners, honour, and chivalry, but they have never been moulded or dominated by Christianity.

Test the motive by applying the maxim which is held to be most typical of Christianity, 'Love your enemies.' Not merely have Englishmen never acted on this principle, but they have never really held it a duty to do so.

The real standard of good conduct for English people has always run upon some such lines as these: 'Love your friends and hate your enemies; look after your family, and get for them all you can; abstain from petty theft and all unlawful deeds; work for a living if you cannot lawfully compel some one else to work for you; help a neighbour in distress; live a peaceful, orderly life, with only occasional outbursts of animation; abhor certain sorts of meanness and cheating; be prepared at any

time to fight for home and country without inquiring into any "merits of the case."

If we would know the real ideals which represent the best standard of conduct for the nation, we must turn not to works of piety, but to the life of the nation as mirrored in its literature and its history.

The utter falseness of the notion that the ideal of the age of chivalry was formed by Christian ethics is apparent by taking the character of that pattern knight, Sir Lancelot, as it is faithfully rendered on his death by Sir Ector, and reported by Malory.

Ah, Lancelot, thou wert head of all Christian knights !
And now—there thou liest, that thou were never matched
of earthly knights' hands ; and thou wert the courtliest
knight that ever bare shield ; and thou wert the truest
friend to thy lover that ever bestrode horse ; and thou
were the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved
woman ; and thou were the kindest man that ever strake
with sword ; and thou were the goodliest person ever came
among press of knights ; and thou were the meekest man
and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies ; and
thou were the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever
put spear in the rest.

Let Spenser testify for England's ideals in
'the spacious days of great Elizabeth,' when
English character was most openly displayed.
The English 'hero' was not then a meek,

46 The Psychology of Jingoism

self-denying, charitable, and forgiving man ; he was a man of powerful, aggressive, self-willed personality, with violent passions, generous, brutal, laborious, and domineering, with an undisguised contempt for the sixth, seventh, eighth, and tenth commandments, and no deep concern for the other six.

The flimsy objection, ' We don't admire their morals,' may be brushed aside at once. We have a whole-hearted admiration for these men, there is no pigeon-holing of one little set of qualities labelled ' morals ;' we admire the men, character and conduct, as set forth in life. Our true national heroes nearly all belong to this stamp. We have no regard whatever for the Christian characters of holy George Herbert, pious John Wesley, saintly Hannah More, that we can compare for one moment with the enthusiasm which encircles the names of Sidney, Raleigh, Hampden, Warren Hastings, Charles James Fox, Nelson, and Wellington. Drive it down to an honest test, and ' morality,' in the narrower senses of the word, hardly counts, so large is the dispensation in Christian virtues which we lavish on our great men. We require of them neither sexual morality, nor common honesty, nor any regard for the lives of people who are not their own countrymen.

Christianity in Khaki 47

These remarks are needed as a preface to enable us to understand the attitude of the so-called Christian Churches towards this war. Religion has been almost universally utilized by governing individuals or classes to furnish a stimulus of fanaticism in war, by representing it as a sacred duty to risk life in trying to punish other peoples who are either heathen or wicked peoples, who have deserved to die, and whose land and other property by right belong to us.

It has been often claimed for Christianity that its distinctive ethical characteristics are two: first, its reliance upon love as the power which makes for righteousness, alike in its influence as an external agent of reform, and in its purifying and ennobling reactions upon those from whom it issues; secondly, the expansion given to this play of inner forces by transcending all limits of caste, race, or nationality, and asserting the doctrine of human brotherhood in its widest sense.

The tribal God, the special race mission, the dominion of hate and forcible revenge,—these are the particular notes of the crude religions which Christianity has claimed to supersede. Yet these are the most distinctive notes of the Christianity of our leading Churches, the

48 The Psychology of Jingoism

Christianity *à la mode*. Those who have followed the records of the pulpits as reported in the religious press, and have read the editorial comments of that press, will be astonished by the consentaneity of voices. Amid the clash of creeds, the angry disputations upon ritual and Church government, the scornful refusal to join hands in any common work of human charity, there has resounded one clear, harmonious, passionate note, representing the oft-dreamed Union of the Churches—a note of loud fanatical encouragement to armed Britain to go forth in Jesus' name to slay their fellows and to take their land.

From the conception of England as a country with a special mission to 'civilize' the world with blood and iron, to the conception of 'England's God' as a tribal God of battles who shall fight with our big battalions and help us to crush our enemies, is a step taken with ease and confidence by most of our Churches.

Scotch evangelicism (save the mark!) strikes the note most loudly. Here is the whole philosophy of the business from Dr. Watson (Ian Maclaren):—'Why should we not recognize in our England the modern Israel, called of God, and set apart by God for a special mission?' That 'mission' is based upon a

'covenant.' 'The Lord thy God has chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth.' 'Take heed unto yourselves lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God which He made with you.' 'Speak ye home to the heart of England, for the covenant stands between God and England.'

How do we know that this covenant exists? Dr. Watson assigns a curious reason :—

Are any man's eyes so blind that he cannot see the mission of England? . . . I do not, when I strike so high a note, forget England's sins. Does our sin break the covenant which the Eternal made with our fathers? No people ever sinned against God like Israel. Between the sin of Israel and the sin of England there is a similarity which arises from a sense of being in the same position.

Our 'peculiar' sins are, then, the 'semeia' of our 'covenant' and our 'mission.' But what is the nature of this mission? Dr. Watson marks it out in no uncertain language when he says, 'We have found out who are our friends in the world and who are our enemies, and we are not going to forget them.' Presumably England's God is to be of special service to her in her mission of 'not forgetting' her enemies.

For a fuller revelation of this covenant and mission we may turn, not inappropriately, to

50 The Psychology of Jingoism

the words of a military chaplain, who may be entitled to rank as a specialist.

Here is the utterance of the Rev. Armstrong Black in a sermon to the Toronto garrison, reported in the *British Weekly* (Dec. 7, 1899):—

Wrath was God's. The war was God's lightning flash and thunder clap among the affairs of men; the flash of God's eye was there, and the voice of God's words. It was God saying, and putting emphasis into the words, 'Sit thou at My right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' It was the Divine warrant given of old to the unique King-priest who in every age 'in righteousness maketh war,' and it is meant to put iron into that blood, and grit into the grip, of the Church in all ages. And there is not another Psalm more closely fitted and attached to Jesus Christ in the New Testament than this one is.

Here also is the Rev. Armstrong Black's particular application to 'the business in hand':—

And if any nation lays itself right athwart the path of true human progress, and, using the very means with which British industry has supplied it, makes itself bristle with arms, not for defence, but ^{the} defiance, and thus not only blocks but menaces the way of advancing and Christianizing civilization—be it in South Africa or elsewhere—Britain's sword should then flash with a Divine commission as swiftly as when heaven's own lightning leaps from the cloud. Seldom does God place a quite clear and definite issue before either a man or a nation.

This recognition of our mission is accompanied by a general laudation of the influence

Christianity in Khaki 51

of war as a school of discipline and an instrument of beneficent rule.

It might occur to some that these doctrines are too distinctive of Old Testament beliefs and manners, and conflict with the New Testament and its gospel of love.

There is something particularly instructive in the calm audacity with which any such distinction is repudiated. Here is Canon Carmichael, of the Protestant Church of Ireland :—

The Bible hardly seems to see any evil in war at all. . . . The Lord Jesus never says a word against war. John the Baptist gives advice to soldiers, but never condemns their profession. St. Paul revels in military phrases. The history of the world is full of wars, *thus must war be congenial to the mind of God in His evolution of humanity. What does God care for death ? What does God care for pain ?*

Assuredly we must be, in a peculiar sense, ' His children,' for we do His work with such good heart !

There is, of course, nothing new in this. The press during the Crimean War furnishes plenty of similar convenient doctrine, which may be summarized in the following passage from a sermon of Charles Kingsley in support of that ' just war ' :—

For the Lord Jesus Christ is not only the *Prince of Peace*. He is the *Prince of War* too. He is the Lord of Hosts, the God of Armies ; and whosoever fights in a just

52 The Psychology of Jingoism

war against tyrants and oppressors, he is fighting on Christ's side, and Christ is fighting on his side; Christ is his Captain and his Leader, and he can be in no better service. Be sure of it, for the Bible tells you so.

Will Kingsley's confident assumption that the Crimean was 'a just war against tyrants and oppressors' (as indeed all our wars have ever been!) cause any to reflect upon the similar confidence which they repose upon those who have assured them of the justice of this war?

Canon Newbolt and Dean Farrar have been foremost among English Churchmen in their enforcement of the Divine nature of war, and the acceptance of the doctrine that 'carnage is His daughter.' But the spirit of this British Christianity is most aptly rendered in the glowing words of 'a most venerable and excellent prelate,' the Archbishop of Armagh, with which Dean Farrar concludes his glorification of the hell which is being enacted in South Africa:—

And, as I note how nobly natures form
Under the war's red rain, I deem it true
That He who made the earthquake and the storm
Perhaps makes battles too.

Thus as the heaven's many coloured flames
At sunset are but dust in rich disguise,
The ascending earthquake-dust of battle frames
God's picture in the skies."

Such meaty doctrine is perhaps too definite for archiepiscopal expression in this country. But the heads of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church give their assent to the peculiar mission of England, and approve war as a righteous instrument. The Archbishop of Canterbury expresses 'the conviction that this call, which is made to all the world which has heard the name of Christ, is yet made specially to us, because, of all nations on the face of the earth, there is none that has the same opportunities of teaching every other land the truth. There is no other nation that can stand by the side of England and the Church of England in the demand that is being made by God upon the exertion of all our energies in this cause.'

This episcopal announcement of the special call of England is officially endorsed by the Prime Minister, who holds that 'the course of events, which I should prefer to call the acts of Providence, have called this country to exercise an influence over the character and progress of the world such as has never been exercised in any empire before,' a doctrine which is more explicitly set forth in a recent address given by the saintliest of his sons.*

* Hon. H. Cecil (Annual Meeting S.P.C., *Church Times*, May 4).

54 The Psychology of Jingoism

'It is impossible not to feel that there was a providential scheme in these things ; and that the English people were called in quite a special manner to undertake what was a universal Christian duty.' An interesting commentary upon the providential nature of the scheme and the speciality of manner is afforded by some ingenious admissions by which Lord H. Cecil qualifies his commendation of the new Imperialism. 'A great many people were most anxious to go with their whole hearts with what might be called the Imperial movement of the day, but had, as it were, a certain uneasiness of conscience whether, after all, this movement was quite as unpolluted with earthly considerations as they would desire it to be.' Is it possible that Lord H. Cecil has been dipping into the reports of the Chartered Company or the Consolidated Goldfields? But a still more instructive sentence follows : 'He thought that by making prominent to our own minds the importance of missionary work, we should to some extent sanctify the spirit of Imperialism.'

If this means anything, it means that foreign missions are to float Imperialism. It is interesting to consider the proposal in conjunction

with the related proposal to use missions in order to float foreign trade.

The following passages from a recent Report of the British Consul at Canton states with admirable lucidity the advantages of this 'combine.' 'Immense services might be rendered to our commercial interests, if only the members of the various missions in China would co-operate with our Consuls in the exploitation of the country and the introduction of commercial as well as of purely theological ideas to the Chinese intelligence.' Which is to float which, is clearly indicated in the following comment: 'To the sceptical Chinese the interest manifested by a missionary in business affairs would go far towards dispelling the suspicions which now attach to the presence in their midst of men whose motives they are unable to appreciate, and therefore condemn as unholy'—a sentence which, for completeness of analysis, leaves nothing to be desired. This scheme of utilizing the 'commercial instinct' for missionary purposes is quite the most ingenious scheme for reconciling God and mammon-worship that has been produced.

From the Christianity of the Archbishops we are led through the Imperial Christianity of Lord H. Cecil and the strictly business

Hell
Teach o

56 The Psychology of Jingoism

Christianity of the China Consul, until we have not many steps to take to reach the Christianity of the sleek gentleman in Tennyson's *Sea Dreams*—

Who, never naming God except for gain,
So never took that useful name in vain ;
Made Him his catspaw, and the Cross his tool,
And Christ the bait to trap his dupe and fool.

Remembering that the Boers are also owners of a tribal God and a particular Providence, to which they have adhered with more vigour and consistency than we, it seems only reasonable to impute some of the fervour which our priests and politicians are displaying to the competitive spirit which operates more powerfully just now when we can make such a good use of God for our special national ends. To displace the 'pious Boer' in the good books of the Almighty, to outbid him by offers of active missionary work, to display the superior attractions of our up-to-date New-Testament Christianity as compared with the narrow, antiquated, Old-Testament religion of the Boers, has been the task of innumerable pulpiteers during the last eighteen months. The boldest attack in this effort to dislodge the Boer from the seat of Divine favour has not been a frontal one : it has consisted in a charge of hypocrisy against

Mr. Kruger and his burghers, who, we assure the Almighty, do not mean the pious words they say, and whose inconsistent and unholy conduct we invite Him to reprobate. The complete self-confidence implied in these imputations, our free, careless handling of this explosive and recoiling charge, have in them a depth of sardonic humour which will give his finest material to the historian of the Imperial episode.

This claim to a monopoly, by right, of the Divine favour is reasserted in all our public acts of worship. We do not appeal to the Almighty to determine the justice of our cause as a judge, rather we instruct Him as a counsel, begging Him to accept an assurance of the justice of our cause from us, who know the facts. The gross impudence of this official posture is swallowed up by its humour, which reaches perhaps its zenith in the prayer recommended by the Archbishops before the General Election, which endorsed the policy of Mr. Chamberlain in South Africa, with its pious request that 'all things may be so ordered and settled that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us for all generations.'

The effect of these high pronouncements of

58 The Psychology of Jingoism

the rectitude of British policy and the corresponding wickedness of our enemies upon the untutored mind of the lesser clergy of the land might have been anticipated by those familiar with the parson in his character of politician. The stream of ignorant malice which has poured weekly from the pulpits defies chemical analysis and may perhaps be indicated best by the following quotations, whose terse mendacity requires no comment.

Here is the famous Edgar case, as presented in writing by the Rev. E. K. Elliott, the Vicar of Broadwater :—

I may mention that a year ago a Mr. Edgar, when standing at his door, was shot dead by a Boer who happened to be passing, simply because he recognized him to be an Englishman.

The same cleric is responsible for the following story of Cronje :—

To-day a gentleman called upon me who, eight years ago, was in the Transvaal, and, what is more, a guest of Cronje during part of his sojourn in that country. Whilst with Cronje he saw him shoot two old Kaffir women because (as he said) they were too old for work !

The Rev. John Alsopp, who claims personal experience in South Africa, is accredited with the following :—

Christianity in Khaki 59

Paul Kruger had been charged with wedging a young girl between two pieces of wood and sawing both wood and girl through the middle because she refused to divulge the military secrets of her own tribe. That charge had not been denied.

It is, however, not only by the priests that Jesus has been hailed as a 'Prince of War.' Our generals have not been slow to utilize the religious sentiment for military purposes, and every soldier going to the front has been furnished with a talisman in the form of a New Testament decorated on the front with the Union Jack, accompanied by texts about 'the blood,' well attuned both to the occasion and the habitual language of Tommy Atkins.

To this khaki Bible a brief preface by Lord Wolseley is appended, recommending the book in the following terms: 'In my opinion, there could be nothing more suitable for the spiritual comfort of a soldier *on active service* than this Testament.' A caviller might be disposed to smile at the italics of Lord Wolseley, which seem to imply that an army on a peace footing gets its spiritual comfort from some other source. But the patronage thus extended by the late Commander-in-Chief to the New Testament suggests a more serious question. Does not Lord Wolseley presume too much upon

60 The Psychology of Jingoism

the ethical obtuseness of a Tommy when he invites him to peruse, I will not say the elevated doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount, but the maxims of common honesty and truth contained within the pages of the book? Does he not fear that these maxims may conflict with soldierly duty and corrupt the military efficiency of the army? What are the ethics of the soldier? The following succinct statement affords a sufficient answer:—

As a nation we are brought up to feel it a disgrace to succeed by falsehood; the word 'spy' conveys in it something as repulsive as slave. We will keep hammering away with the conviction that honesty is the best policy, and that truth always wins in the long run. These pretty little sentences do well for a child's copy-book, but the man who acts upon them in war had better sheathe his sword for ever.

This passage from the 'Soldier's Pocket-book,' by Sir Garnet Wolseley, I commend to the notice of the distinguished patron of the New Testament, and to the bishops and clergy who are so impressed by the 'cleansing,' 'bracing,' 'fortifying' influences of war.

APPENDIX

The following letter, culled from the pages of the *Manchester Guardian*, deserves a more permanent attention as an example of serviceable satire :—

THE CHURCH AND WAR

To the Editor of the 'Manchester Guardian.'

Sir,—I see that 'the Church's duty in regard to war' is to be discussed at the Church Congress. That is right. For a year the heads of our Church have been telling us what war is and does—that it is a school of character, that it sobers men, cleans them, strengthens them, knits their hearts, makes them brave, patient, humble, tender, prone to self-sacrifice. Watered by 'war's red rain,' one bishop tells us, virtue grows; a cannonade, he points out, is an 'oratorio'—almost a form of worship. True; and to the Church men look for help to save their souls from starving for lack of this good school, this kindly rain, this sacred music. Congresses are apt to lose themselves in wastes of words. This one must not—surely cannot, so straight is the way to the goal. It has simply to draft and submit a new Collect, for war in our time, and to call for the reverent but firm emendation, in the spirit of the best modern thought, of those passages in Bible and Prayer-book by which even the truest of Christians and the best of men have at times been blinded to the duty of seeking war and ensuing it.

Still, man's moral nature cannot, I admit, live by war alone. Nor do I say, with some, that peace is wholly bad. Even amid the horrors of peace you will find little shoots of character fed by the gentle and timely rains of plague and famine, tempest and fire; simple lessons of patience and courage conned in the schools of typhus, gout, and stone; not oratorios, perhaps, but homely anthems and rude hymns

62 The Psychology of Jingoism

played on knife and gun, in the long winter nights. Far from me to 'sin our mercies,' or to call mere twilight dark. Yet dark it may become. For remember that even these poor makeshift schools of character, these second-bests, these halting substitutes for war—remember that the efficiency of every one of them, be it hunger, accident, ignorance, sickness, or pain, is menaced by the intolerable strain of its struggle with secular doctors, plumbers, inventors, schoolmasters, and policemen. Every year thousands who would once have been braced and steeled by manly tussles with small-pox or diphtheria are robbed of that blessing by the great changes made in our drains. Every year thousands of women and children must go their way bereft of the rich spiritual experience of the widow and the orphan. I try not to despond, but when I think of all that Latimer owed to the fire, Regulus to a spiked barrel, Socrates to prison, Job to destitution and disease—when I think of these things and then think how many of my poor fellow-creatures in our modern world are robbed daily of the priceless discipline of danger, want, and torture, then I ask myself—I cannot help asking myself—whether we are not walking into a very slough of moral and spiritual squalor.

Once more, I am no alarmist. As long as we have wars to stay our souls upon, the moral evil will not be grave; and, to do the Ministry justice, I see no risk of their drifting into any long or serious peace. But weak or vicious men may come after them, and it is now, in the time of our strength, of quickened insight and deepened devotion, that we must take thought for the leaner years when there may be no killing of multitudes of Englishmen, no breaking up of English homes, no chastening blows to English trade, no making, by thousands, of English widows, orphans, and cripples—when the school may be shut, and the rain a drought, and the oratorio dumb.—Yours, &c.,

A PATRIOT.

August 30, 1900.

CHAPTER IV

VAINGLORY AND SHORTSIGHT

VAINGLORY is a characteristic which a Jingo-ridden people exhibits in common with the child and the savage. The naïve braggadocio of the latter, expressed in boastful claims and (where imagination is strong) in detailed invention of dangers and difficulties overcome, is rightly regarded as a note of irrationality rather than of immorality. Even Falstaff with his hundred men in buckram half credits his story as he tells it: sheer self-assertion drives the mind of the savage or the child to multiply his enemies and exaggerate their size; the delusions are genuine, and telling them to others feeds and strengthens them. Confront such a child or savage with plain fact or figure, and he will betray a most extraordinary cunning in avoiding it, so as to preserve an illusion which pampers that pride of personality which is the root of falsehood. So with a people

64 The Psychology of Jingoism

which falls back on its barbaric nature and gives it temporary dominion. Its loss of perspective, inability to test evidence, reversal of normal standards of value, make it a prey to the crudest dupery and bring it to a state of mind which is as humorous as it is pitiful.

There is no plainer evidence of the deration-alizing power of the war-spirit than the infantile vanity which it sustains in contradiction of most certain facts. Let me illustrate. A little before the outbreak of war, when it was desirable to show that the Boers were but a small minority of the population in the Transvaal, they were commonly set down at some sixty thousand men, women, and children : the smallness of this number served to enhance the enormity of the tyranny they were held to exercise, while it stimulated interference by making coercion seem easy. After the outbreak, when things went badly with us, the same mob-mind which had swallowed the earlier figures found no difficulty whatever in believing that these Boers, with the Free Staters and rebels, had a force in the field amounting to eighty thousand, or even a hundred thousand adult males. In point of fact, history is likely to arrive at the conclusion that we despatched nearly a quarter of a million men against a foe which never

Vainglory and Shortsight 65

numbered as much as forty thousand all told. Indeed, no one who took the best available statistics of the population of the Republics and of the 'disloyal' districts in the Colony could reach a higher figure. In view of this, is there not an exquisite humour in the appeal made by the Dean of Canterbury in a send-off sermon addressed to the East Kent Yeomanry, rounding off an eloquent period by quoting Macaulay's famous lines :—

And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods?

The psychological puzzle is a most interesting one. Here is a people, the great majority of whom know quite well that our forces are vastly superior in numbers to the Boers (their indignation at the insolence of the ultimatum being based chiefly on the smallness of the people), that our soldiers are mostly professionals, theirs amateurs; that our control of the material resources which ultimately decide a war are incomparably greater; and yet they are capable of feeling the same sort of mental elation when the tide of victory turns towards us as if we had successfully engaged France

66 The Psychology of Jingoism

or Russia. Instead of being astonished or ashamed that our armies take so long in executing (most imperfectly as now appears) a job the small size of which was plainly recognized at the outset, and of visiting the blame upon the Government or the generals, the mind of the people is swollen with a genuine pride at our achievement, which seems quite capable of leading her, upon some slight provocation, into conflict with some strong Continental power. This exultation does not arise from any consideration of the real difficulties involved in such a campaign, conducted at so great a distance from the base, but is simply a savage burst of triumph such as carries men to all absurdities or enormities in an hour of victory.

This vainglory is even likely to lose us the gain which might issue from our disastrous experience. It is true that its presence does not prohibit a sense of uneasiness, which clamours for a radical reform of our military system and a great increase of our army and our navy—the logical contradiction involved in this demand does not cause any difficulty. But our childish self-esteem is such that the most instructive criticism of our conduct of the campaign, issuing, as it must, from Continental

Vainglory and Shortsight 67

soldiers serving with the enemy, is likely not so much to fall unheeded on our ears as to awaken a perverse resentment, which will prevent us from accepting just those strictures which it is most important that we should accept.

Closely linked with this vainglory is a complete cancelment of all sane, normal grasp of the laws of moral causation; as the one rests on a distortion of vision, the other rests upon a shortening of vision. The child and the savage live in and for the present. So does the Jingo. This is the real explanation of his view of 'settlement'—a short, sharp display of physical force stamping out 'rebellion,' and attended by an administration of 'good government' under autocratic rule. This 'settlement' is no result of reflection; it ignores all the moral or 'sentimental' factors which practically direct history; it is simply the hot-headed resentment of a victorious foe eager to quit the field of conflict and retire to rest or revelry. A formal settlement, a superficial pacification, can be effected by such means; but to speak of 'finality' in connection with a settlement which feeds every root of hostility in the conquered people, and merely prevents ill-feeling from finding vent in violent conduct, is simply to turn our back upon the plainest

68 The Psychology of Jingoism

lessons of all history. It is to substitute a formal settlement adjusted to a five years' focus for a real settlement of a permanent character. Such shortsight, coupled with a conviction that a reign of force will bring peace and contentment, is not really to be dignified by the name 'policy ;' it simply wraps up in empty phrases about 'good government' and 'equal rights' the primitive savage lust of the victor in stamping on a fallen foe, and dragging him in chains at the back of his triumphal car. A Jingo-ridden people looks neither before nor after, but lives in and for the present alone, like other brutes.

CHAPTER V

THE ECLIPSE OF HUMOUR

WITH the abandonment of a sane, constant, rational judgment the Jingo loses all true sense of humour, and thus exhibits one more distinctive sign of savagery. A fool public that will swallow each new mess of falsehood from the recently-detected liars of the press, that will belaud with adulation the very generals who have been officially discredited, that will commend the perfection of the military commissariat and hospitals upon the interested testimony of the very officials whose conduct is called in question, while they ignore the detailed, unprejudiced evidence of their own half-starved and neglected relatives at the front, that will abuse the courage and the prowess of their foe at the very time they are boasting the soldierly qualities of those who fail to conquer them—a public that does all this,

70 The Psychology of Jingoism

and stands half-indignant, half-incredulous, when it is exhibited as a laughing-stock to the civilized peoples of the world, could surely afford no more convincing proof of its mental collapse.

When we charge the Boers with the very illegalities and outrages of which we ourselves are guilty, Europe flings in our face the not unnatural taunt of 'hypocrisy,' and the virtuous scorn which we exhibit in condemning the taunt affords convincing proof to our critics. For all that, 'hypocrisy' fails to hit the mark; 'hypocrisy' implies judgment and calculation, and these are just the qualities which are eminently lacking; 'hypocrisy' ignores the true humour of the psychology of Jingoism. An illustration will serve to make clear my meaning. We are quite genuine in the indignation we display against the Boers for shooting our soldiers with 'explosive' bullets; it is, we quite believe, a barbarous practice such as we ourselves would not adopt. Now, even in the midst of this indignation we are aware that the so-called 'explosive' bullets are not explosive, but expansive, and that there is no evidence at all of any use of explosive bullets. Somewhere in the background of our mind we retain an uneasy recollection that the expansive

The Eclipse of Humour 71

bullet is a British invention, and that in 1899, at the Hague, in spite of the remonstrances of all the other Powers (except America), we insisted upon the right to use it. Most of us have failed to forget that, at the beginning of the war, these expansive bullets were served out to the troops sent out for active service. Although the Hague Conference, by a decisive vote on June 22nd, 1899, had condemned the use of those bullets known as Mark IV., Mr. G. Wyndham, Under Secretary of State for War, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, July 11th, replied: 'Mark IV. has been the service bullet for the British Army since February, 1898, and as such has been issued to our troops in South Africa.' It is true that nine months later, on March 23rd of 1900, Mr. Wyndham said: 'Mark IV. was the regulation bullet, and the original garrison in South Africa had it; but it was recalled, and has never been issued in this campaign.'

Now, from the evidence of British officers, we know that these bullets were not actually recalled from use until January 7th—*i.e.* three months after the beginning of the war—and that General Baden-Powell, having no other ammunition left, continued to use them afterwards in Mafeking. Many British troops were

72 The Psychology of Jingoism

captured during the early weeks of the war, and much of our ammunition was taken by the Boers. The latter have asserted that such expansive bullets as they have used consist of our captured ammunition, and it is known that the ordinary Mauser ammunition served out at the beginning of the war to the commandoes was neither explosive nor expansive. When Lord Roberts, on March 11th, addressed to the President of the two Republics his protest against the use of 'explosive' bullets, condemning them as a 'disgrace to any civilized Power,' he must have known (1) that Mr. Treves and other eminent surgeons had not only denied the use of 'explosive' bullets, but had reported: 'It is evident from their [*i.e.* the Boers'] wounds that the Lee-Metford is not so merciful as the Mauser;' (2) that Mark IV. or Dum-dum bullets had been in use by our troops when their ammunition had been taken, and (3) that the Webley expansive revolver-bullet had been in general use at Elandslaagte and elsewhere until a War Office order was issued, dated March 28th, prohibiting its use 'until further orders.'

All the available evidence tends to show that we invented and used expansive bullets against the Boers, and that such expansive

The Eclipse of Humour 73

bullets as they used were taken from us. In face of such evidence we charge the enemy with using explosive bullets, and are righteously indignant at his doing so.

Yet this is not rightly styled hypocrisy ; it is mental collapse, accompanied by an absence of that common sense of humour which, in normal minds, aids reason in detecting palpable inconsistencies or absurdities.

Were it worth while, we might adduce an almost infinite variety of instances of this mental confusion exhibiting itself in grotesque reasoning. Had our personal feelings been disengaged, no people would have been quicker than ourselves to recognize the heroic courage of two such nations standing up in bold challenge for their rights against the largest empire of the world. At the opening of the war, however, it was the smallness of the people that particularly roused our indignation at the insolence ; it seemed to us that confidence of bearing and audacity of language were rights appertaining only to 'Great Powers.' It might seem reasonable that the success of the Boers, not merely in resistance, but in attack, should tend to reduce our sense of their insolence. Not so, however ; we continue to harp upon the smallness of their numbers as a

74 The Psychology of Jingoism

grievance. Just as so small a people had no right to issue such an ultimatum, so now armies so small have no claim to be treated as armies, but only as bands of marauders, guerillas, etc. Considering our difficulty in tackling our tiny adversary, it might appear somewhat mean, as well as irrelevant, to abuse him for his smallness; but such meanness and irrelevance belong to the Jingo spirit, and furnish to bystanders its most exquisite humour. To call it 'hypocrisy' is to spoil its flavour. It is the genuineness of our conviction that 'rights' go by sizes which makes the essence of the case. 'Small people have small rights,' is to us just now a quite self-evident proposition. The humour which other people see in our charges of cowardice against the Boers because they won't stand on the sky-line and let us shoot at them, or come out and mass on the open within range of our guns; the various allegations of unfair fighting we bring against them; the *Times* with its deprecation of our excessive 'leniency' and 'humanity'; the 'bogus' plots against Lord Roberts; the entire detailed procedure of 'a war undertaken in the cause of justice and civilization'—the lambent humour of all this is unfortunately lost to us in our dull ferocity; but it is there, and others see it.

The Eclipse of Humour 75

It is precisely in these detailed follies, and not in the larger framework, that history repeats itself. There is a full page of the *Bigelow Papers* bearing on the Mexican War which merits study for its minute exposure of the sort of humour which our conduct is just now providing for the gaiety of nations :—

Afore I came away from home I had a strong persuasion
That Mexicans worn't human beans, an ourang-outang
nation,

A sort of folks a chap could kill an' never dream on't arter,
No more'n a fellow'd dream o' pigs that he hed hed to
slarter.

I'd an idee that they were built arter the darkee fashion all,
An' kickin' colored folks about, you know, 's a kind o'
national ;

But wen I jined I worn't so wise ez that air Queen o'
Sheeby,

Fer, come to look at 'em, they ain't much diff'rent from
what we be,

An' here we air ascrougin' 'em out o' their own dominions,
Ashelterin' 'em, as Caleb sez, under our eagle's pinions,
Wich means to take a feller up jest by the slack o' 's
trowsis,

An' walk him Spanish clean right out o' all his homes an'
houses ;

Wal, it does seem a curus way, but then hooraw fer
Jackson !

It must be right, fer Caleb sez it's reg'lar Anglo-Saxon.
The Mexicans don't fight fair, they say, they piz'n all the
water,

An' du amazin' lots 'o things that isn't wat they oughter ;

76 The Psychology of Jingoism

Bein' they haint no led, they make their bullets out of copper

An' shoot the darned things at us, which Caleb sez ain't proper;

He sez they'd ough' to stan' right up an' let us pop 'em fairly
(Guess when he ketches 'em at thet, he'll hev to git up airly).

Thet our nation's bigger 'n theirn an' so its rights air bigger,
An' thet it's all to make 'em free that we air pullin' trigger.

Thet Anglo-Saxondom's idee's abreakin' 'em to pieces,
An' thet idee's thet every man does just wat he damn pleases;

Ef I don't make his meanin' clear, perhaps in some respex I can,

I know thet 'every man' don't mean a nigger or a Mexican.

Read Dutchman for Mexican, and the sentiments of Hosea Bigelow are seen to be identical with those of our own Yellow Press and of 'British South Africa.'

The bankruptcy of national humour is, however, best exhibited in two convictions obstinately planted in the Jingo mind. The first is a general belief in the 'badness' of the Boer, of such sort that, when an inventive press produces any new specific but unsupported charge, as of shooting prisoners, poisoning wells, firing on ambulances, we know that it is true, because it is just the sort of thing 'the wicked Boer would do.'

The Eclipse of Humour 77

‘Never forget to slander those you have wronged.’ This self-protective instinct in a nation which has reached a certain stage in the evolution of morals is aptly illustrated by Mr. Gilbert Murray in the following fable:—

Consider the fowls of the air. A very pretty small bird, the great Tit, when hungry, will lift up its beak, split open its brother’s head, and proceed to eat his brains. It might then be satisfied, think you? Not at all! It has a moral nature, you must please to remember, which demands to be satisfied as well as the physical. When it has finished its brother’s brains, it first gets very angry and pecks the dead body; then it flies off to a tree and exults. What is it angry with, and why does it exult? It is angry with the profound wickedness of that brother, in consequence of which it was obliged to kill him; it exults in the thought of its own courage, firmness, justice, moderation, generosity, and domestic sweetness.*

Depend upon it, the comedy thus provided is not lost upon our Continental neighbours, and it helps to swell the humour of another of our Jingo attitudes—our claim that the achievements of our arms in South Africa redound to the military prestige of the Empire. ‘See how all our Colonies rally round us, how brave and enduring are our soldiers, how skilful our commissariat, how scientific our generalship, how firm and successful our career of conquest.’ Our neighbours are convinced that we are

* *International Journal of Ethics*, October, 1900.

78 The Psychology of Jingoism

fully conscious of our real defects, and that we are assuming this bold, triumphant pose in order to brave it out; and, being thus convinced, they miss the full humour of the proceeding. For we are quite genuine in our quaint persuasion that we are heaping glory on ourselves, and are establishing a splendid prestige in the eyes of the world: the contempt of European nations is, we feel certain, a mere affectation bred of jealousy, while their unconcealed hostility is proof of the real respect which our prowess has produced.

The psychical root-cause of this collapse of humour, with the extraordinary misjudgments to which it lends itself, is the total eclipse of sympathetic imagination involved in the self-absorption of the fray. The Jingo spirit is a blind fury, which disables a nation from getting outside itself or recognizing the impartial spectator in another. Here is the quintessence of savagery, a complete absorption in the present details of a sanguinary struggle inhibiting the mental faculties of imagination and forethought which are the only safeguards of a policy.

CHAPTER VI

THE INEVITABLE IN POLITICS

THE crude form of religious superstition, the reversion to belief in 'England's God,' a barbarian tribal deity who fights with and for our big battalions, has already been sufficiently described. It remains, however, to direct attention to a quasi-philosophic superstition invoked to aid and abet our aggressive policy. The doctrine of 'the inevitable' is not new, nor is it confined to the larger issues of public life. A mere child learns the early practice of discriminating its responsibility for success and failure, imputing to itself as a personal merit anything that turns out well, explaining a failure, a mistake, a sin, by reference to the inherent 'cussedness' of external things. What teacher is not familiar with the naïve distinction, "I got this sum right, but the other one would come wrong"? The same sense of destiny, marked by an utter repudiation of personal responsibility, is illustrated by the theory

80. The Psychology of Jingoism

of the total depravity of inanimate objects, which most domestic servants embody in the familiar phrase, 'It came to pieces in my 'and.'

No one can follow up the various forms assumed by this doctrine, as illustrated in private life, without perceiving its one-sided application. The things that we 'cannot help' are always the things that go wrong. Now, this 'heads I win, tails you lose' philosophy is not conclusive to reflecting persons, even where their private affairs form the subject-matter. In politics it is noteworthy that the 'inevitable' is always evoked to defend a *prima facie* bad case. The doctrine is as old, far older, than 'politics' itself; early thinkers gave it concrete support from 'astrology,' imputing 'disasters' of a very human origin to the malign conjunctions of heavenly bodies, or locating 'the inevitable' in the mischievous will of some offended deity, or in some fateful power transcending even the divine. In recent times it comes up with a new garb, a new pomp of phraseology. New England Puritanism seems largely responsible for the language of the latest revival, the stern logic of Calvinism tending to transmute Providence into a harder sort of destiny. At any rate, it is significant that the doctrine of

The Inevitable in Politics 81

‘Manifest Destiny,’ defined not inaptly by the humourist Josh Billings, as ‘the science of going to the devil before you get there,’ first assumed prominence as a condemnation of one of the most indefensible acts of American history—the Mexican War.

A pseudo-scientific view of history has been used to support this new predestinarianism in politics. In pre-scientific days nations and individuals coveting the lands of other people—for example, the buccaneers and adventurers of the great Tudor age—did not prate of manifest destiny, or seriously plead ‘the mission of civilization.’ Until quite recent times, history showed little else than the lusts and interests of individuals, classes, nations, working naked and unashamed in a world of chances; the ‘reign of law’ was little recognized in the affairs of men. Even nowadays the actual men who play so important a part in politics, as diplomatists, administrators, concession-mongers, are quite aware that the events which most concern them are anything but ‘inevitable’—that it is a very ‘touch and go’ affair whether they get what they want or not; a matter of carefully balanced moves and counter-moves, plotting and contriving; though some of these are discreet enough in their

82 The Psychology of Jingoism

public utterances to employ the phraseology of sham-scientific history, and talk of the 'trend of civilization,' imputing to 'movements,' 'tendencies,' and 'forces' the events which are actually due to the conscious will of individual men.

Much of the vogue of 'the inevitable' is attributable to the sloppy thinking of popular historians, who, instead of applying modern conceptions of causation to enforce human responsibility, as they rightly do, use them to to exclude both individual and collective will as operative causes from the sphere of politics. Even writers of the well-earned reputation of Sir John Seeley and Mr. C. H. Pearson have sometimes lent their authority to a view of history which sees it composed of great tidal movements of economic or racial forces making for a partition of the earth which shall give such and such dominion to Russia or to Anglo-Saxondom, or marking out for China or the Negroid races certain portions of the globe as their predestined heritage.

This view of history lends itself to dramatic treatment and literary men are apt to play with it. A good illustration is the description which Victor Hugo gives of the actual working of events in the French Revolution, in his book 'Ninety-three':—

The Inevitable in Politics 83

This was a miracle-working wind. To be a member of the Convention was to be a wave of the ocean. This was true even of the greatest. The force of impulsion came from on high. There was a Will in the Convention which was that of all, and yet not that of any one person. This Will was an Idea, an idea indomitable and immeasurable, which swept from the summit of heaven into the darkness below. We call this Revolution. When that Idea passed, it beat down one and raised up another ; it scattered this man into foam, and dashed that one upon the reefs. This Idea knew whither it was going, and drove the whirlwind before it. To ascribe the Revolution to men is to ascribe the tide to the waves. The Revolution is a word of the unknown. Call it good or bad, according as you yearn towards the future or the past, but leave it to the power which caused it. It seems the joint work of grand events and grand individualities mingled, but it is in reality the result of events. Events dispense, men suffer. Events dispense, men sign—Desmoulins, Danton, Murat, Grégoire, and Robespierre are mere scribes. The great and mysterious writer of these grand pages has a name—God ; and a mask Destiny. The Revolution is a form of the eternal phenomenon which presses upon us from every quarter, and which we call Necessity.

This striking and instructive passage discloses the very heart of the fallacy. In the earlier sentences Hugo comes near to a true explanation of the actual phenomenon—viz. a course of events which seems to transcend individual conscious direction, suggesting the true cause, the operation of a general or collective will, which he not unwisely calls an Idea.

84 The Psychology of Jingoism

But carried away by a dramatic frenzy, and wishing to emphasize the compulsion of this sway upon the individual, he places the motive-power outside the will alike of individual and collective man, and so plunges into the doctrine of the Inevitable.

But surely, it will be said, a sound scientific view of conduct does legitimize the doctrine of 'the inevitable;' there are 'laws' and 'forces' of which philosophic historians must rightly take account. And this is true. The mistake consists in regarding the 'laws' and 'forces' as powers external to the mind of man. The only direct efficient forces in history are human motives. How, then, arises this inhuman, or suprahuman, conception of 'the inevitable'? It arises in the following way: A number of different persons, groups, or classes—princes, politicians, soldiers, etc.—each seeking some particular end, form, by co-operation and interaction, a complicated plan of policy, the whole of which is not visible or conscious to any one of the participants. The historian, seeing the resultant line of action, and the clear-cut pattern which it takes, abstracts this design, and, knowing that it does not proceed from the full conscious agreement of the agents, places it wholly outside

The Inevitable in Politics 85

their wills, and calls it 'inevitable' or 'destiny.'

The stress of party politics makes this view a highly serviceable weapon of defence. When the plain man asks, in some concrete case of public conduct, 'Is it right to lie, steal, kill?' and wishes to press home some commonly accepted rule of right or wrong, praise of blame, this doctrine of 'the inevitable' is cast in his face; he is told that it is idle to enter minutely into the morals of a 'policy' which is in accordance with the natural evolution of events, or to scrutinize closely the pain, cruelty, and individual injustice which are involved in wide historic workings.

Let us test this doctrine as it has been applied to the South African War. The particular merits of the diplomacy of 1899, whether Chamberlain or Kruger was the more dishonest or malevolent, the validity of the particular grievances which Outlanders were said to suffer, the genuineness of the demand for the franchise, even the actual existence of a Dutch conspiracy—these, it is contended, are not the really vital issues; they do not furnish a real explanation or justification for the war. 'The struggle between two opposed ideals, two incompatible systems, was bound to come sooner

86 The Psychology of Jingoism

or later; the racial and economic antagonisms between Boer and Briton were irreconcilable; the affair is rightly regarded in the larger light of a conflict of races, in which the race of lower social efficiency must yield place to the race of higher social efficiency. Nineteenth-century civilization was destined to destroy the obsolescent civilization of the sixteenth century.'

Such is the jargon which 'sociologists' offer as a screen for the naked iniquities of aggressive war. A condensed statement of this 'philosophy' is comprised in the following sentences of the little volume in which M. Demolins discusses the question, 'Boers or English: Who are in the Right?'—

When one race shows itself superior to another in the various externals of domestic life, it *inevitably*, in the long run, gets the upper hand in public life, and establishes its predominance. Whether this predominance is asserted by peaceful means or feats of arms, it is none the less, when the proper time comes, officially established, and afterwards universally acknowledged. I have said that this law is the only thing which accounts for the history of the human race and the revolution of empires, and that, moreover, it explains and justifies the appropriation by Europeans of territories in Asia, Africa, and Oceania, and the whole of our colonial development.

M. Demolins concludes that 'the present struggle between the Boers and the English is

merely a manifestation of this law'—a formula which relieves him of the necessity of even touching in a single page any of the actual concrete issues that have arisen between the Transvaal and Great Britain. England happens, through her colony, to be the nearest neighbour of the Transvaal, and, since neighbourhood of nations implies conflict, England was bound to measure her strength against the Transvaal and to assert her predominance; being of superior social efficiency, she is able to conquer, and has the right to do so. It matters nothing, according to M. Demolins, whether the particular quarrel which the nation of superior social efficiency picks with its weaker neighbour is justifiable or not; the law of competition among nations rises superior to such details. Some one objects, and seeks to raise questions such as, 'What is the standard of social efficiency according to which you pronounce British civilization superior to Boer for the conditions of life in the Transvaal? What right has Britain to determine in her own cause the relative social superiority? Will the socially superior nation retain this superiority intact if she spreads it over an unlimited area of territory taken forcibly from other peoples whom she is bound to rule by force?' But to M.

88 The Psychology of Jingoism

Demolins and his sort all such questions are as irrelevant as is the question of the honesty of the avowed motive for such a conflict. For the nation of superior social efficiency '*inevitably* gets the upper hand'—from which he and his fellow-thinkers argue backwards that when you see a nation getting the upper hand of another, 'by peaceful means or feats of arms' (a matter of perfect indifference which method is adopted!), you are aware that that nation is endowed with superior social efficiency and is fulfilling an inevitable law, is 'in the right,' according to the only sense that phrase can bear.

I give M. Demolins's argument this prominence, not merely because the book is advertised as 'British Colonial Policy scientifically vindicated by a prominent Frenchman,' but because the argument does really formulate the feeling by which many Englishmen have been induced to brush aside the doubts and qualms arising in connection with the conduct of the Colonial policy of the British Empire by pushful statesmen. The '*inevitable*' is a complete sedative of the old conscience, and, when convenient phrasemongers can identify it with 'the right,' it may even 'run' a new conscience of its own.

The Inevitable in Politics 89

Let me conclude by a brief statement of the more salient falsehoods which underlie the argument of M. Demolins in its application to the South African war. In the first place, there was no antagonism or fundamental incompatibility of races, ideals, or systems between the British Colonies and Boer Republics. Dutch and British settlers were divided by the same lines of distinctively economic cleavage in the Republics as in the Colonies—the Dutch, the rural population, cultivating the soil; the British, dwellers in the towns, concerned with trade; the peaceful competition of social ideas, customs, languages, which was rapidly assimilating the two peoples in the Colonies, had already made a definite beginning in the Republics; the processes of silent assimilation were going on with satisfactory rapidity, until menaces and open violence interrupted them. The Dutch and British races have, as might be expected from their origin, fused easily and advantageously in England, in the United States, and, until lately, in Cape Colony; the social and other divergencies were not those of the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, but merely of the mushroom civilization of the new industrial town and the simpler, ruder conditions of cattle-farming in a land where

90 The Psychology of Jingoism

large farms and consequent social isolation were necessary. The differences of political and legal system between Colonies and Republics, of which so much has been made, were very slight in comparison with what they held in common—the common impress of Roman Dutch law upon the administration of justice and its embodiment in similar statutes, the common system of local government, etc. Until the friction of the last few years occurred, the process of fusion was continuous and visible everywhere, slower in the Transvaal than in the Free State, in the Free State than in the Colony, but everywhere proceeding at an accelerated pace as railway and other communications gave more mobility to the population, and brought home a genuine identity of interests and the need of growing federation of States, for economic and social, if not for definitely political, purposes. The alleged ‘inevitability’ of conflict from rooted antagonism of systems is a mere piece of verbiage, the falsity of which was brought home to me most powerfully during my investigation of the political situation on the spot in the months preceding the war. The situation, with its approaching catastrophe, visibly resolved itself, not into externally compelling forces, but

The Inevitable in Politics 91

into certain moral factors of individuals, and groups of individuals, chiefly consisting of ignorance, greed, and personal animosity. The inevitable was not responsible for the misconduct of shifty diplomatists, Chamberlain and Kruger, or for the mutual distrust which made diplomatic intercourse futile, or for the blend of bluff, menace, and evasion, the cynical repudiation of the most solemn undertakings under the Convention, the rejection by our statesmen of arbitration as a means of settlement upon grounds of narrow technicality, themselves a proper subject for a Court of Arbitration. There was nothing 'inevitable' in the fabrication of detailed falsehoods by which British and Dutch colonists alike were incited to hostility, and by which the public sentiment of Great Britain was manipulated in the interests of men who were calculating the 'profits' they stood to make by war. The warlike preparations made on either side, the voting of supplies, the sending out of troops accompanied by Jingo trumpeting—these specific acts which made for war were none of them inevitable. The only point where I was brought into direct experience of anything which bore the semblance of 'inevitability' was in the tone and demeanour of

92 The Psychology of Jingoism

Sir Alfred Milner, who spoke, wrote, and acted as if he recognized himself the chosen instrument of a plan to force a crisis in South Africa.

The only display of destiny was in the perverse will of man; everything which, to the idle spectator, seemed to indicate the 'inevitable,' resolved itself into human motives.

As we were told war was inevitable, so we are told annexation is inevitable. In the name of inevitability we are invited to banish justice and reason, whose protests are silenced by the false finality implied in the term. The distinction between true and false laws of causation, as applied to national conduct, is here made manifest. Politicians invoke 'the inevitable' for some brief expediency or some convenient emergency; summoned in order to bless the lust of the moment, it remains to curse. The true laws of the Inevitable are not seen in short bursts of passion and the conduct they impel, but in the long rhythms and compensations of reason and justice. That abuse, which is nothing less than the impudent negation of international morality, a quasi-scientific sanction of collective theft, does not impair by one jot or one tittle the literal validity of the true law.

The great masterpieces of literature have

The Inevitable in Politics 93

interpreted the real nature of the Inevitable as it shows itself in history. This conception inspired the Greek dramatists under the form of Nemesis, the law of life whereby the past misconduct of a man, or a race, dogs its foot-steps to its final fall. How powerfully do they, and with them the father of history, Herodotus, convey the lesson of the Hybris of Imperialism in the case of Persia! The following words of Sophocles surely deserve the consideration of Mr. Chamberlain and his big Englanders: 'Insolent infatuation begets the Tyrant. Insolence, if it be idly overfed with unseasonable and excessive food, ascending to a heady promontory, plunges into the sheer abyss of the Inevitable (Anagké) where it can find no footing wherewith to walk.'

Such laws of the Inevitable, of which the Greeks had prophetic glimpses, we can see governing the lives of all great empires of the past; and yet, following the same road, we hope to escape the same fatal goal. This hope is itself the fruit of 'infatuation'; the danger-point of Empire is already reached when Hybris so swells the head and corrupts the intelligence as to suggest that we alone of Empires possess some special skill to dodge the inevitable.

94 The Psychology of Jingoism

Nowhere is this corruption of intelligence more plainly seen than in the short-range finality attributed to annexation as a 'settlement.' Seen rightly, the crime called annexation is an absolute pledge of permanent unsettlement, by the natural operation of human motives. If the guilt of this war lay mainly with the Boer peoples, who, animated by vain ambitions, had themselves unworthily sought Empire, and the expulsion of British rule from South Africa—if they had planned and plotted for this end, as the financial-politicians and their journalists still assert (without adducing a tittle of sound evidence) some consciousness of the justice of their heavy punishment would win its way into their hearts and sap their indignation: thus annexation might have become settlement. But this is not the case; the Boers are conscious of no such guilt, nor will they in long years of subjugation recognize the justice of their punishment. Annexation is not for them a Nemesis, the retribution of a lustful career, the penalty of an ambition that o'erleapt itself. On the contrary, the passionate sense of injustice will preserve and feed the sentiment of nationality; and all who know the Boers, as friends or enemies, are agreed, whatever other qualities

The Inevitable in Politics 95

of good or evil they impute to them, that one characteristic stands out pre-eminent — they know how to wait.

The Nemesis-drama brings out another feature of 'the inevitable.' Tragedy teaches how hard a thing it is to kill a man. History teaches how much harder it is to kill a nation. There are two lines in a doggerel song, telling the story of a famous martyr in the cause of freedom, the American John Brown, which, by a single stroke of passionate genius, convey the powerful truth :—

John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave,
But his soul goes marching on.

In Shakespeare's tragedy the ghosts of the victims of oppression, the murdered ones, appear on the eve of the catastrophe to confound, enfeeble, and unnerve the tottering tyrant.

There are those who think yet that, if we can shoot down enough Boers, and coerce the bodies of the others, all will go well ; nationality will thus be slain, the spirit of the Republics will disappear.

But it is no idle rhetoric, it is the clear spinal teaching of history, which assures us that the soul of the nations we are bent on slaying will

96 The Psychology of Jingoism

not die ; that they will dog our footsteps in the dark and tortuous path of our Imperial career ; that they will come upon us in an hour of weakness, when, enfeebled by a parasitic life of Empire, we are entangled in the meshes of our world-wide ambitions, and will help to paralyze us by their sudden presence, unnerving us in the final struggle, and bringing home to us the true meaning of the inevitable in politics.

CHAPTER VII

ARE EDUCATED JINGOES HONEST?

To many this outbreak of Jingoism has been peculiarly serviceable in revealing the true character of friends and acquaintances. In some cases the revelation has been peculiarly painful, because it has raised suspicions as to the intellectual honesty of men and women whom they have respected in the past, and to whom they have been attached by many bonds of fellowship. Some, it is true, urge them to put aside such suspicions as 'unworthy,' saying: "Surely you can admit that persons may differ from you, even on a vital issue like this, without imputing dishonourable motives to them. You have no more right to regard their convictions as dishonest than they have to denounce you as a traitor.'

Now, this advice is generous; how far is it just? The question of intellectual honesty is

98 The Psychology of Jingoism

a somewhat subtle one, and is not to be determined in an offhand way. It does not arise in any real shape in the Jingoism of the 'masses,' which no one seriously pretends is based upon any information or understanding of the actual issues. The ebullition of passion there is merely temperamental violence, without any real substratum of intellectual conviction. 'Avenge Majuba' stirs fiercely the minds of men who have no knowledge of the historic incident. 'Save the British Empire' provokes powerful feeling among those who could not even name our major colonies, and know nothing of the danger to which that Empire is or is not exposed. This childish patriotism, untempered by knowledge, is a dangerous force in the hands of unscrupulous politicians, but it contains nothing that can be called dishonest; the hypnotic influence of certain phrases upon the mob-mind can hardly be dignified by such a term.

But how is it with educated persons who have abandoned themselves to the same passions, and who profess to be 'convinced' of the justice and inevitability of the war? Are they equally honest in their 'convictions'? Here one distinction must be made upon the threshold of the inquiry.

Are Educated Jingoës Honest ? 99

Dishonesty, in the sense of professing to believe what one does not really believe, is very rare at all times ; in this matter it may be safely regarded as undeserving of consideration. Those who profess to believe the war to be just and necessary do honestly believe this. But have they honestly come by this belief ? That is the real question. Have they used such reasonable care in unbiassed consideration of the evidence as entitles them to claim an honest judgment ? The most respectable case, perhaps, can be made out for those persons who have said : ' I have neither time nor ability to go into the merits of the matter ; but I know that we have had in Sir A. Milner a competent, impartial man upon the spot. He has made a thorough investigation, and I accept his judgment.' This acceptance of authority is always dangerous, but it implies no dishonesty ; where it is excessive, it is culpable indiscretion. ' The man who knew Milner at Oxford,' or others who have been impressed by the general approval of his career and talents, are clearly entitled to give some weight to his authority. That weight, however, is diminished if the admirer has had the time and opportunity to read the actual despatches which the High Commissioner has written, for they bear upon

100 The Psychology of Jingoism

their face signs of bias and of passion so clear as rightly to evoke suspicion. The educated man who falls back upon Sir A. Milner is, however, indisputably in the strongest position of defence.

But this is not the normal intellectual position of the educated Jingo. He professes to be convinced from evidence of the corruption of the Boer oligarchy, the reality of the Outlander grievances, and of the danger to British power in South Africa from a Dutch conspiracy, and of the right these facts gave us to coerce and annex the Republics. Now, here again we may discriminate. The minds of many so-called educated persons are so constituted that a conviction simply means that a certain quantity of evidence of some sort or other has been put before them, or merely that a statement has been reiterated many times. Many persons are convinced that there was a Boer conspiracy, and can even tell you what it was and what it aimed at, in the same manner as they are convinced that Colman's is the best mustard, and Bryant and May's the best matches. The minds of such persons are a hopeless prey to political financial intriguers, who can control a sufficient number of newspapers and of other avenues of public information. These persons

Are Educated Jingoists Honest? 101

get their convictions honestly, though these convictions can hardly be termed intellectual.

The case of others is different. Persons of more ability, accustomed in their business or profession to weigh evidence and to discriminate, have, in many instances, refused to apply these reasonable tests to the evidence submitted to them on this issue. How many of us have had the experience of offering an anti-war book or pamphlet to an educated Jingo, and receiving the reply: 'This is pro-Boer. I will not read it.' The editors of Jingo journals have felt quite safe in continuing to repeat the most audacious falsehoods long after they have been exposed, simply because they knew that their readers, though perfectly aware that journals existed which gave another side, would not look at papers which opposed the war. Now, this attitude of mind has been the rule, and not the exception, among the classes which boast their education and intelligence, and it is an attitude of dishonesty. Many well-informed Jingoists have been perfectly aware that certain business interests in South Africa have a powerful hold upon the press, and upon the kinds of information which reach the people of this country, and yet they have not cared to

102 The Psychology of Jingoism

endeavour to correct their judgment by going to any other source.

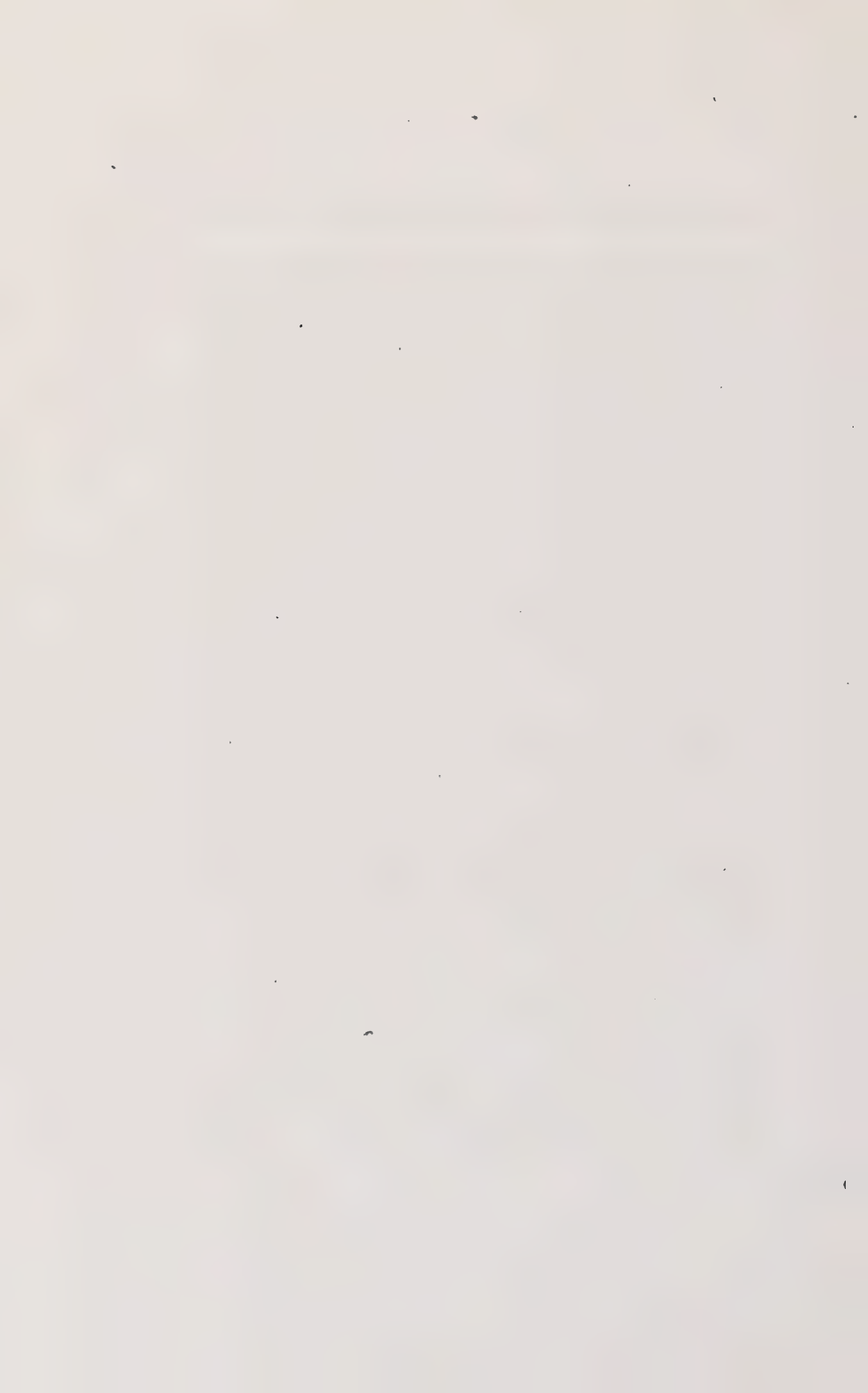
All Englishmen capable of the least reflection must have known that, in the nature of the case, they were only hearing one side of the matters at issue, and that some suspension of judgment was reasonable. Every one of the educated persons who are so thoroughly convinced of the justice of our cause must admit that it is likely that the Dutch nation in Holland, drawing nearly all their information from Dutch South African sources, are animated by a bias similar to, though not so strong as, ours, have received a mass of evidence directly contradictory to ours, and that their intellectual judgment has been formed in a fashion similar to ours.

Wilful disregard of these considerations implies dishonesty. That dishonesty is evinced in, and illustrated by, specific cases of treatment of evidence. An example is the value attached to the interview which Mr. Theo Schreiner alleged that he had with Mr. Reitz, the State Secretary of the Transvaal, in which the latter admitted the plan to work for an independent Dutch republic. Here is a strong partisan, an agitator by profession, who produces from memory a long verbatim account of an

Are Educated Jingoos Honest? 103

interview which took place eighteen years ago, and of which no notes were taken either at the time or afterwards. Now, such evidence would carry no weight whatever either in an English court of justice or in any ordinary affair of private business ; on the contrary, the verbatim character of the report would rightly discredit it among reasonable men. Yet this has been generally received as the best evidence for the Dutch conspiracy. The application thus implied of a different standard of valuation of evidence to this issue is sheer intellectual dishonesty, for a man accustomed to test evidence cannot apply this different standard and not know that he is doing so. If it is argued that he does not know it, then he has permitted his normal intellect to be disordered by passion, and the 'dishonesty' removed from the specific instance is thrown back upon the process of permitting passion to enter the domain of intellect so as to usurp its functions.

✓



PART II

The Manufacture of Jingoism

CHAPTER I

THE ABUSE OF THE PRESS

THE most momentous lesson of the war is its revelation of the methods by which a knot of men, financiers and politicians, can capture the mind of a nation, arouse its passion, and impose a policy. It is now seen that freedom of speech, public meeting, and press not merely affords no adequate protection against this danger, but that it is itself menaced and impaired; the system of party, which has heretofore, by providing a free, vigorous, and genuine scrutiny of every important political proposal, been a strong safeguard against all endeavours of a clique or a class to exploit the commonwealth, has broken down under the strain of an attack unprecedented in its vigour and in the skill of its direction. It is of the gravest importance to understand the methods of this manipulation of the public

108 The Psychology of Jingoism

mind, for the combination of industrial and political forces which has operated in this instance will operate again, and will copy the methods which have been successful once.

The information from South Africa which impressed upon the public mind a conviction of the justice and necessity of war, and which aroused and sustained the passion of Jingoism, did not flow freely into the country through many diverse, unconnected channels, as is commonly supposed. The extraordinary agreement of the metropolitan and provincial press, Unionist and Liberal, religious and secular, in its presentation of leading facts, in its diagnosis of the situation and its pressure of a drastic policy, is doubtless responsible for the unwavering confidence which the great majority of the nation placed in the policy of the Government at the outset of the war. Such an amount of consentaneity seemed to attest a case of overwhelming strength. When the Government press was joined by the two leading Opposition organs in London, and by the great majority of important Opposition papers throughout the country; when the non-political press, and, in particular, the most powerful journals of the Churches, urged the necessity of war, the doubts of intellect and

The Abuse of the Press 109

qualms of conscience in many minds were overborne by such unanimity.

When to this union of the press was added the voices of a thousand pulpits and the instruction of a thousand platforms, where J travellers, missionaries, politicians, and philanthropists set forth substantially the same body of facts and drew the same morals, the case for war seemed undeniable.

It is little wonder that people unacquainted with the structure of the press, and with methods of educating public opinion, should have been imposed upon by this concurrence of testimony. If the papers which they read, and the speakers to whom they listened, had drawn their facts and their opinions from a variety of independent sources, the authority they exercised would have been legitimate. But what was the actual case? Turn first to the press, by far the most potent instrument in the modern manufacture of public opinion. The great majority of provincial newspapers, and most of the weeklies, metropolitan or provincial, religious as well as political, derive their information regarding foreign and colonial affairs entirely from the chief London 'dailies,' supplemented, in the case of the more important organs, by 'cables' from the same sources

110 The Psychology of Jingoism

which supply the London 'dailies.' Most provincial papers take not only their news but their 'views,' with abject servility, from the London journal which they most admire.

In a very few instances, important provincial papers receive first-hand intelligence from special correspondents of their own by mail, but for all prompt intelligence they are absolutely dependent upon the sources above-mentioned. The otherwise miraculous agreement of the British press is, thus, first resolved into the agreement of a few journals, chiefly in London, and of two or three press agencies. We have next to ask from what sources do these latter get their information? On this point the case of the South African war is peculiarly instructive. All the leading London papers received their South African intelligence from correspondents who were members of the staff of newspapers in Cape-town and Johannesburg, supplemented in two instances last year by information from special travelling correspondents, who, in their turn, derived most of that information from newspaper offices in South Africa. In particular, the two London newspapers which exercised most influence upon the mind of the educated classes in this country, the *Times* and the

The Abuse of the Press I I I

Daily News, were instructed, in the former case, by the newly-appointed editor of the *Johannesburg Star*, in the latter case by the editor of the *Cape Times*. The two chief cable companies also drew most of the Capetown intelligence from the *Cape Times* and the *Argus* Company, while one of them was fed with Transvaal intelligence by a prominent member of the Executive of the South African League at Johannesburg.

The press unanimity in Great Britain is thus traced to certain newspaper offices in Capetown and Johannesburg. Now, if these half dozen newspapers had been independent and reliable organs, the news they supplied, and the forcible policy they imposed upon the British press and the British public might have reasonably carried weight. But they were neither independent nor reliable; they are members of a bought and kept press. The *Cape Argus*, bought some years ago by Messrs. Rhodes, Barnato, and Eckstein, is now the nucleus of a Company, owning some half dozen papers in South Africa, and among them the *Star* of Johannesburg, whose editor instructed the readers of the London *Times* in the necessity of war. Since the capture of the Orange Free State, the Company has strengthened its

112 The Psychology of Jingoism

resources by obtaining from the British military authorities the sole right to establish a newspaper at Bloemfontein. The newspapers at Kimberley and at Buluwayo are in the same hands, and the *Cape Times* is financially controlled by Mr. Rutherford Harris, a colleague of Mr. Rhodes in his several financial ventures. The principal organs of public opinion at all the political pivots in South Africa are thus owned by the little group of men who also own or control the diamond mines at Kimberley, the gold-fields of the Rand, and the government and resources of Rhodesia.

In a country like South Africa newspapers are not in themselves either a safe or a remunerative investment; and it may be safely asserted that Messrs. Rhodes, Beit, Barnato, and Rutherford Harris put money into these newspapers for the same reason which induced Messrs. Eckstein to establish last year, at immense expense, the short-lived *Transvaal Leader*—the desire to control the public mind. The business man in an English manufacturing town, the country vicar, or the college don, who has been convinced by the unanimity of the provincial and the London press in recording and endorsing the statement of Outlander outrages, the Dutch conspiracy, the cowardice

The Abuse of the Press 113

and the treachery of the Boers, etc., might have had less confidence in his final judgment had he known that he was reading news which had been fashioned for his reading by the editors of Mr. Rhodes and of his business associates, who had, in their capacity of company directors, assessed the business value of a war at several millions extra profits per annum.

Since this control of the press by business men for business purposes lies at the very root of Jingoism, it is desirable to make this charge quite clear. We have traced the information which corrupted the mind of the British public to a few South African journals owned by the men who tried to 'rush' the Transvaal by treacherous force five years ago, men admittedly moved by special business ends, which they believed could be subserved by a war conducted at the expense of the British public. Now, these men do not write, though they often inspire, the news and the articles of the press they own. The personal instruments of their educational policy are the editors of their papers. It is by no means necessary to assume that these editors are corrupt or dishonest, receiving pay, either from their employers or from outside persons, in order to fabricate or distort news or to write in a sense opposed to

114 The Psychology of Jingoism

their own judgment. That a corrupt and reptile press exists, not only on the Continent, but in great Britain and its colonies, in which false and biased matter is inserted by means of proprietary compulsion or outside bribery, is indisputable. But it is not necessary to urge any such crude charge against Rhodesian editors. Take the case of Mr. Garrett, editor of the *Cape Times*, who is clearly entitled to be considered one of the necessary men in bringing about the war, inasmuch as his inflammatory cablegrams to the *Daily News* visibly corrupted the policy of that powerful newspaper and seduced to Jingoism a large section of Liberals throughout the country, breaking the party for effective criticism of the Government policy in parliament and in the country. Mr. Garrett is indignant when the impartiality and independence of his position have been called in question : he has had an absolutely free hand and this was a condition of his employment. The same is the case with Mr. Monypenny, taken from the *Times* office to direct Mr. Rhodes' paper in Johannesburg, and to feed the most important paper in England at a most critical epoch in our history. What is the real worth of the protestations of these gentlemen ? The answer is plain. When these editors were

The Abuse of the Press 115

appointed, it was ascertained that they favoured the policy of the proprietors, and that they would be likely to work vigorously along the desired lines ; if they departed from these lines they would be dismissed from their post and other editors appointed who would write what was wanted. A clever young journalist taken out to Capetown or Johannesburg will naturally get his views and his information moulded by experienced and able men of business on the spot, who provide him with 'exclusive information' which he cannot check, and introduce him to men who can tell him just what 'he ought to know.' That the blood, the money, and the honour of Great Britain should be at the mercy of talented young journalists floundering about on the surface of a turbid sea of politics and finance in a country quite strange to them, is indeed a terrible reflection.

The control of the London press by the Rhodesians is thus perfectly intelligible. It is right to add that for purposes of popular éducation they were particularly favoured by the efforts of the *Daily Mail*, which enlarged the bounds of London journalism in the provinces, spreading its yellow light in regions hitherto unapproached. Although the proprietors of the *Daily Mail* have been share-

116 The Psychology of Jingoism

holders in the Chartered Company, and that paper received its South African intelligence from the same sources as the rest of the great London newspapers, such influences are, of course, not essential to explain the Jingoism of the cheap sensational press in any country.

In order to get an effective mastery of the press, it is only necessary for the operators to purchase or control a certain number of influential papers, which shall be used to mark a path of sensational policy and set the pace; the self-interest of yellow journalism will do the rest.

It will be objected that too great an influence is here imputed to the South African press. 'Surely,' it will be said, 'the facts and opinions thus communicated are corroborated from countless private sources of information. These are not the views of a few newspapers only; the unanimous testimony of British South Africa endorses them.' And this is true.

But what is the essential worth of these feelings of British South Africans and of the 'facts' by which they support them? Race feeling, since the Raid, has been terribly embittered, the minds of British and Dutch alike have been kept in a constant strain of hostile receptivity, drinking in each idle story which

The Abuse of the Press 117

ignorance or malice has invented to stimulate antagonism. The mind of both races has been little else than a vast maw of credulity, incapable of testing statements or of weighing evidence.

Most of the South Africans whose statements have been accepted here as independent first-hand evidence have had a very narrow, purely local, experience in some towns of the Colony or the Republics ; very few have mixed with the Boers, still fewer can speak the Taal. The outlander of Johannesburg, in particular, whose voice was heard with so much respect as proceeding from the spot, had virtually no knowledge of the Boer burgher population ; and even the grievances of which he prated so freely, he had learned from his newspapers and his League. The slightest investigation of the innumerable statements from South Africa discloses the fact that nine-tenths of this evidence is the mere reproduction of the paragraphs of those very newspapers which I have named. The saloon, the club, the train, and other common avenues of conversation helped in the work of propaganda ; and politics, propagated by short stories and bar tittle-tattle, contained perhaps one part of truth to ten of loose embroidery.

118 The Psychology of Jingoism

The worth of such evidence, selected and worked up for popular investment by a sensational press, is very small. The Dutch press in the Transvaal, equally reckless and nearly as corrupt, wrought in similar fashion, and an examination of the popular opinion of Holland would disclose a mass of anti-British evidence, derived by methods parallel to those here described. This fact alone might serve to abate the overweening confidence which we have felt in the consensus of 'British South Africa.'

Journalism does not exhaust the influence of the press. Magazine articles and volumes in which party politics parades as history furnish more solid food to Jingo passion. Here again the authority of 'British South Africa' has been well-nigh absolute. Few magazines have been willing to print a 'pro-Boer' article; and it is no secret that even the genius of Olive Schreiner could not get a hearing for what she most cared to say in any important English magazine. I speak from personal knowledge when I say that the retail book trade, led by Messrs. Smith and Son, has done its best to 'boycott' 'unpatriotic' literature. Those familiar with the trade will understand how injurious such obstructions are to the circulation

The Abuse of the Press 119

of a book. 'But surely you keep books dealing with both sides of the South African question?' a lady asked a London bookseller. 'Madam,' was his reply, 'there is only one side for us—that of our country.' This, the characteristic note of Mr. Chamberlain, the identification of the war with British loyalty, has been firmly stamped upon the press, and so upon the mind of the people.

For practical purposes there no longer exists a free press in England, affording full security for adequate discussion of the vital issues of politics.

How it stands in the Colonies, which have exhibited so great an enthusiasm in the British cause, the following statement from a well-informed correspondent in Melbourne will indicate;—

It is easy to explain Australian sympathy. The financial groups have first secured the South African press, have then secured the English press through its correspondents who are on the staff of the South African press (and by purchasing outright some London papers); and, finally, have secured the Australian press, which takes all its cablegrams from the Jingo press of London. The newspapers here all take the same cablegrams from the same London correspondents, pooling the expenses. The Australian people are therefore—and for many years have been—ultra-Tory and ultra-Jingo in their outside politics, although democratic and progressive in their home politics. This system of

120 The Psychology of Jingoism

cablegrams brings with it some grave dangers. I cannot help feeling the force of some words of Lowell, written many years ago, on this subject :—

‘[The telegraph], by making public opinion simultaneous, is also making it liable to those delusions, panics, and gregarious impulses which transform otherwise reasonable men into a mob.’

The mischief is much accentuated where, as in Australia, the metropolitan cities are so large in proportion to the population of each colony, and the metropolitan papers are so weighty in influence and so widely circulated. I have just cut to-day, from a daily paper, the enclosed cablegram. It is just of a kind to inflame the sentiments of Irish Catholics, who, but for the cablegrams, would be inclined to suspect the British conduct in forcing the war.

The ‘enclosed cablegram’ reads as follows :—

BOER DESECRATION AND BURNING OF CHURCHES.

The Boers in Northern Natal, before evacuating Newcastle and Dundee, defiled and desecrated the Catholic churches in those towns, and finally set fire to the buildings.

It only remains to add that the cabled statement is absolutely destitute of truth, the product of some lie factory in London or Melbourne.

The ‘freedom of the press’ in New Zealand may be gauged from the case of Mr. Grattan Grey. This gentleman was appointed leader of the official reporting staff in the New Zealand legislature, receiving a lower salary than his

The Abuse of the Press 121

predecessor on the strength of a written agreement permitting him to contribute to the press. Not long ago, writing as correspondent to an American newspaper, Mr. Grey made some criticism regarding the origin of the war and the Jingo feeling of New Zealand. When the paper was brought to the attention of the Premier, the latter asked Mr. Grey to explain his conduct. Mr. Grey pointed out that his action was justified by the terms of his agreement, but the Government appointed a Committee of conspicuously 'loyal' members, which recommended the dismissal of Mr. Grey. This recommendation was adopted, and Mr. Grey has lost his post.

The method of manufacturing loyal support in our colonies for the war, or for any rash exploit a British Government might choose to institute, is particularly simple. The authoritative information set before the New Zealand public, before and during the war—almost the only information which was allowed to penetrate their minds—came in the following manner. The Colonial Office in London cabled to Mr. Seddon, the New Zealand premier, whatever facts or opinions Mr. Chamberlain wished to impose upon the colonial mind, and Mr. Seddon communicated the matter thus obtained to all

122 The Psychology of Jingoism

the leading newspapers. What were the facts Mr. Chamberlain would communicate, and what the facts he would withhold, under such circumstances, may be surmised by any one familiar with his statements of the South African issues in this country, where he has been exposed to contradiction and to competition. Well may he glory in the 'loyal spirit' of our colonies—the work of his own hands!

The earliest crop of English lies, the murder of Mr. Lanham 'kicked to death' by brutal Boers,* the lurid picture of the Rand refugees, 'men scourged with long rhinoceros whips; women struck with rifles, robbed, and reviled with brutal oaths and jeers; babes snatched from their mothers' arms and flung back with insults,'† etc., were flourishing in Canada and Australia this year, carefully nurtured by emissaries of the South African League sent over to feed colonial loyalty.

What these war-makers have done must be distinctly understood. They have passed, through their kept South African journals, upon the press of Great Britain and her colonies, a continuous stream of falsehood, partly distortion of facts, partly fabrication of

* *Daily Mail*, Oct. 9.

† *Evening News*, Oct. 7.

The Abuse of the Press 123

lies, directed to bias the judgment and inflame the passions of the people. These falsehoods could not be corrected by those who knew the truth, because the only avenues of effective correction were the columns of the very press which circulated the falsehoods, and they were closed. Where some slight pretence of 'hearing the other side' was maintained, as, for instance, by *The Daily News*, the familiar methods of editorial footnotes, precluding contradiction, or of always awarding a 'last word' to the Jingo, who used his opportunity to add new falsehood, were persistently employed.

What is at stake here is nothing less than the credit of printed matter. Even among the educated classes there survives a certain tendency to believe printed statements of fact in a newspaper or a book; and uneducated persons are far more profoundly impressed by the truth and the importance of printed than of spoken words. As large new masses of the population are brought within the range of the newspaper or the book, the aggregate intellectual credit of the press has expanded, until it represents a vast sum. This intellectual credit may either be economized and maintained by careful and accurate use of the press, or it may be squandered. The war-press,

124 The Psychology of Jingoism

having this immense fund of popular confidence to draw upon, has recklessly abused its trust, pouring misstatements into the public mind. The credulity which swallows new lies from the same sources whence issued the old detested lies, the apparent indifference with which each fresh detection is received, must not deceive us. Public confidence buoyed by passion is slow to fall, but the habit of mistrust once established will grow, until the credit of the press sustains a fatal collapse.

Those papers which have lent themselves to this unscrupulous enterprise are debasing the intellectual currency of print—one of the foulest injuries which can be inflicted upon a civilized nation.

CHAPTER II

PLATFORM AND PULPIT

A BIASED, enslaved, and poisoned press has been the chief engine for manufacturing Jingoism. It has, however, been accompanied by a corresponding abuse of platform and of pulpit. Free speech has been struck off from the roll of British liberties during this war. In some scores of English and Scotch towns public meetings, summoned to protest against the war, were broken up by rowdyism, winked at or condoned by authority; in a score of other towns the police avowed their inability to protect the conveners of a public meeting in the exercise of their legal rights—a virtual admission of a state of anarchy. In hundreds of towns and villages all over the country men and women who were known or believed to entertain opinions unfavourable to the war were subjected to personal assaults and insults; their property was damaged, and the law gave

126 The Psychology of Jingoism

them neither protection nor redress. During this reign of terror the country was flooded with 'Imperialist' lecturers, agents of the South African League or its English branch, the British South Africa Association, mine-owners from Johannesburg, missionaries from Cape Colony, who toured the country, professing to lecture on the history of South Africa, and to set before the audience in some Literary Institute, Chamber of Commerce, chapel, church, or political club, their personal knowledge of the facts in South Africa.

The condition of the British mind is best gauged by its discriminative treatment of Cape Colonists. A fair-minded England would have desired to give a free and equal hearing to the representatives of both parties in our colony. Instead of doing this, England gave free speech to one section and repressed it in the other. There is no more signal evidence of a damaged intelligence and a corrupted sense of justice than the brutal denial of a hearing to Mr. Cronwright Schriener and to the Colonial Delegates appointed by the People's Congress in the Colony. No more perilous condition can be imagined than that of a people, wielding the power of self-government and determining the issues of peace and war, which is so infatuated

Platform and Pulpit 127

as to refuse a hearing to the representatives of the majority of the population in one of its own colonies.

As in the press, so on the platform, full licence of expression for one side, contumelious repression for the other! In breaking liberty of speech the press worked closely with the mob, and encouraged or excused mob-violence. One example of the coarse brutality employed will suffice—the paper is an unimportant one, but may well serve as a type.

Mr. Cronwright Schriener, the pro-Boer agitator, appears to have paid Tunbridge Wells a visit, but of a somewhat clandestine nature. His coming was not heralded as one would have expected for such a notability of the hour; probably his sympathisers in the borough feared that the reception would be a little too patriotic and sincere, and in cordiality eclipse previous demonstrations. His mission was, however, not of a public nature—a drawing-room was sufficiently large for his audience—and the town did not learn of his arrival until he had taken his departure. A man or a cause that relies upon such stealth and secrecy for progression will not get far, and will only bring to advocates, heartache, and may be something more. Mr. Schriener will do well to give Tunbridge Wells a wide berth.

The organization of the platform has been conducted by the same body of men as manipulated the press. Paid agents of the South

128 The Psychology of Jingoism

African League have been at work since the beginning of last year, both in England and the colonies, financed by the group of financiers who will be the only gainers by the war. The British South African Association, composed of South African investors and politicians committed to a general policy of aggressive imperialism, has faithfully followed the instructions of the League, and has co-operated with the South African Vigilance Committee (the League under another name) for the object of fanning the war-flame and securing the complete subjugation of the Dutch. These particularist bodies have used the Unionist organization in this country just as the South African organs in the press, controlled by the same men, have worked through the Unionist press, assisted by the sham-Liberal *Daily News*. It has been necessary to set forth these details in order to show how the fabrication of public opinion is possible and has been achieved. The acme of audacity is reached when the very men, the mine-owners and speculators, who have assessed the gains of war at several million pounds per annum, put forward themselves and their professional representatives as the impartial instructors and advisers of the British public on its policy of war and

settlement. Our educated Jingoës have commonly taken the trouble to read some books and articles attesting the justice and necessity of war and annexation. But who are the gentlemen who write these books and articles, and who impose their 'history' and their opinions upon the British people? They are, as we have already pointed out, directors, engineers, and lawyers of Messrs. Wernher, Beit, the Consolidated Gold Fields and other gold-mining companies of the Rand, editors of newspapers owned by Mr. Rhodes and his business associates, such as Messrs. Garrett and Monypenny, professional or business men who have been political agitators and Reform prisoners at Johannesburg, such as Mr. Hosken and Dr. Hillier, with a handful of excited clergymen and philanthropists, such as Mr. Theo. Schriener and the Rev. A. Hofmeyr, whose political judgment and influence is utterly insignificant in their own country. The British public receives these men who, through their league, their Outlander Council, and their mendacious press, had engineered the war, as its most reliable advisers regarding the necessity of war and the mode of settlement.

These men deserved a hearing, but so did the leaders of the Dutch Afrianders in our

130 The Psychology of Jingoism

colonies, loyal British subjects, as they have now been proved. To hear the one and to refuse a hearing to the other is the most elementary injustice; to take the advice of either as authoritative in the direction of our policy is the rankest folly. The man on the spot always knows more, but he is always biassed, and generally cherishes a private interest which does not square with, and is often opposed to, the interest of the commonwealth. The frantic applause with which these mine-owners and their press approve of the conduct of Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Alfred Milner in the war, the settlement, and the treatment of rebels, ought to awaken grave suspicion in all reflecting minds.

But then there is the unanimous testimony of the Churches in South Africa. The clergy and the missionaries have been of unique service in fanning the flames of resentment against the Boers. Is this also an illegitimate manipulation of public opinion? That mine-owners and politicians should have succeeded in impressing the public mind with the idea of this conflict as a 'sacred war,' undertaken in the interests of Christianity and civilization, is their culminating triumph. I do not for one moment impute dishonesty of purpose to the

Churches, or any consciousness of being tools ; but tools and screens they are, none the less. The history of South Africa is full of the feuds between British missionaries and the Dutch ; and from the former a feud, a latent animosity, has been transmitted to the British ministers of the towns. Missionary and minister have claimed, often in good earnest, to be the friends and protectors of the natives, and have favoured and promoted a policy towards the natives which is opposed by Africander sentiment and conviction. Into the merits of the controversy it is needless to go, though I may remark in passing that a careful reading of the Jingo literature issuing from South Africa clearly shows that British Africander sentiment upon the native question favours the Dutch and not the missionary policy. The business men who mostly direct modern politics require a screen ; they find it in the interests of their country, patriotism. Behind this screen they work, seeking their private gain under the name and pretext of the commonwealth. Sometimes this screen is inadequate, and a second covering is required. This has been the case in the present business : indiscreet directors 'gave away the game ;' the hands of financiers were visible upon the stage of politics moving the figures ;

132 The Psychology of Jingoism

the appeals to vengeance and fear for the Empire showed danger of collapse; an appeal must be made to sentiments of higher grade and more stability. In the message of the Churches issuing from South Africa there was the same amount and the same sort of spontaneity as lay behind the Outlanders' petition and the other measures by which the war-spirit was stirred and maintained in England. The conviction of the British clergy and missionaries in South Africa that the war was just and necessary was quite genuine (why should it be otherwise?); and their conviction of its utility was enhanced by hopes, the futility of which will presently appear, that the more liberal sentiments of the British Isles towards the natives (dubbed 'Exeter Hall' by Dutch and British colonists alike) would prevail in a settlement whereby the Imperial power would be substituted for the power of local parliaments in dealing with the natives. The capitalists who had actually announced their intention of forcing native labour by hut and labour taxes, drastic pass laws, and other coercive methods, were glad to utilize the blessing of the Churches; and their politicians and their press transmitted this clerical approval, and circulated it throughout the length and breadth

of this country, suppressing as far as possible the equally earnest and unanimous protestations of the Dutch Africander Churches, and appropriating to themselves the title of 'Christian South Africa.'

Although there is no record of the clergy of any Church having failed to bless a popular war, or to find reasons for representing it as a crusade, this approval of the Churches has ranked as independent and powerful testimony to the justice of our cause; and though the elevation of the natives played no part whatever in the public mind before hostilities begun, it has since been utilized so skilfully that many humane and liberal persons have been induced to regard it as the chief motive and justification of the war. The press and the politicians who forced the pace with Outlander grievances, suzerainty, or the Dutch conspiracy, have kept it up with a native policy, securing thus that firm co-operation of business and philanthropy which is the distinctive note of British Imperialism. The two motives are commonly fused in some vague phrase about the necessity of securing to the black races 'the dignity of labour' or of 'protecting them from the vices of civilization.' The frequency with which these phrases

134 The Psychology of Jingoism

recur in the books and speeches of the South African clergy who have been introduced to spread light in England, shows how well the notion has been drilled into their minds.

It is idle wholly to ignore the fact that the dependence of the Churches upon the alms of the rich plays a most important part in South Africa, where the rich are very few and more closely united in their businesses, than elsewhere. A very small number of men can make or mar the success of any religious work in the towns of South Africa. Mr. Rhodes, in particular, has been a munificent patron of the Churches, though he is no churchgoer himself; and many a good work thrives upon the profits of De Beers and the goldfields, which sets aside every year a substantial sum out of its profits for charitable donations. No reproach attaches to the clergy of these Churches, but it is natural that their feelings should be touched and their judgment blinded by these gifts. So, too, when an English bishop or other Church dignitary visits South Africa in search of health or on a holiday, what more natural than that he should be entertained by Mr. Rhodes at Groote Schuur; that he should then visit the De Beers people at Kimberley, and afterwards pass into the company of Mr. Eckstein at Johannesburg,

and the Chartered magnates in charge of Rhodesia? Why should he suspect that he is not seeing everything, or that his views are being moulded for him as he passes along the carefully greased path of travel? He is quite honest, and those who entertain and inform him are quite honest in the expression of their views. None the less, the members of the British aristocracy, the big business men, members of Parliament, and eminent divines who have returned from a visit in South Africa to enlighten us upon the racial, political, and economic problems of that kaleidoscopic country, have brought with them just that information and those sentiments which it was intended they should bring. I do not, of course, impute to the hospitable British South Africans a fully conscious design of impressing any special point of view upon visitors: this conscious play was probably very rare, and even then was blended with the native instinct of hospitality, so prevalent in these as in other colonies. It is rather to be regarded as a necessary incident of the economic situation that the mining capitalists and their financial friends should have enjoyed these private individual opportunities of inculcating their facts and their views upon the minds of

138 The Psychology of Jingoism

Outlander Council, and again as the South African Vigilance Committee, have been in effect the 'British South Africa' of Sir Alfred Milner's despatches: it was their influence and evidence that ultimately forced us into war, and that is forcing upon us a miscalled "settlement," fraught with costs and dangers which the future will disclose.

This conjunction of the forces of the press, the platform, and the pulpit, has succeeded in monopolizing the mind of the British public, and in imposing a policy calculated not to secure the interests of the British Empire, but to advance the private, political, and business interests of a small body of men who have exploited the race feeling in South Africa and the Imperialist sentiment of England. They have done this by the simple device of securing all important avenues of intelligence, and of using them to inject into the public mind a continuous stream of false or distorted information.

It may well be true that public opinion in Holland, and even in other Continental countries, has been similarly poisoned from Dutch Africander sources. The Hollander press of the Transvaal, Mr. Kruger's secret service, and the influence of the Africander

Bond may have helped to manufacture the strong anti-British sentiment which prevails in most Continental countries. But this is primarily their concern. Though we may suffer from it, we are not responsible for it. But we are responsible for submitting to the process of manipulation which is here described. Dangers incalculably great, must await an empire whose citizens, when brought to the consideration of a policy which entails vast sacrifice of life and treasure, are unable to give a patient equal hearing to both sides, but eagerly submit their minds to statements of fact and opinions which they have no reason to believe to be impartial and disinterested. Here is one of the great tests of a capacity for empire. Can a body of interested men upon the spot, business men or politicians, impose their authority upon the Empire so as to utilize the imperial resources for their particular ends? In the case of South Africa it has been possible. Will it be possible again?

THE END

LONDON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
STAMFORD STREET AND CHANCERY CROSS.

WITHDRAWN
1911

La Vergne, TN USA
12 January 2010

169762LV00007B/141/P



Short Loan Collection

WITHDRAWN

Kessinger Publishing's® Legacy Reprints

Thousands of Scarce and Hard-to-Find Books

- Americana
- Ancient Mysteries
- Animals
- Anthropology
- Architecture
- Arts
- Astrology
- Bibliographies
- Biographies & Memoirs
- Body, Mind & Spirit
- Business & Investing
- Children & Young Adult
- Collectibles
- Comparative Religions
- Crafts & Hobbies
- Earth Sciences
- Education
- Ephemera
- Fiction
- Folklore
- Geography
- Health & Diet
- History
- Hobbies & Leisure
- Humor
- Illustrated Books
- Language & Culture
- Law
- Life Sciences
- Literature
- Medicine & Pharmacy
- Metaphysical
- Music
- Mystery & Crime
- Mythology
- Natural History
- Outdoor & Nature
- Philosophy
- Poetry
- Political Science
- Psychiatry & Psychology
- Rare Books
- Reference
- Religion & Spiritualism
- Rhetoric
- Sacred Books
- Science Fiction
- Science & Technology
- Self-Help
- Social Sciences
- Symbolism
- Theatre & Drama
- Theology
- Travel & Explorations
- War & Military
- Women
- Yoga

Download a free catalog and search our titles at: www.kessinger.net



ISBN 1120040000



9 781120 040008